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European guide
for the implementation of active guidance
for persons with disabilities

Association of parents and friends of people with intellectual disabilities of Valenciennes (APEI du Valenciennois), Institutions and services assistance by work (ESAT) of the French association for the paralysed (APF) “Les Ateliers du Haut Vinage”, University of South Brittany (Bretagne-Sud), Walloon federation of adapted-work enterprises (EWETA), Ploiesti Petrol-Gaz University, PODKREPA Labour confederation,
under the supervision of the European Think Tank Pour la Solidarité

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Index

- Introduction3
- 1. ORA project's approach.....5
 - 1.1. Active guidance5
 - 1.2. ORA project process: creating and managing local networks and groups.....6
 - 1.3. Interaction between field work and reflexions at European level.....7
 - 1.4. Experimentation process overview.....7
 - 1.5. Summary of local ORA experimentations..... 11
 - 1.6. Cashing in at European level: key success factors 14
- 2. Guide to carry out an active guidance process for persons with disabilities across a territory.....23
 - 2.1. Create and manage local stakeholders networks around a common federative project23
 - 2.1.1. Identify stakeholders concerned.....23
 - 2.1.2. Find a resource person.....23
 - 2.1.3. Hold a successful first meeting...24
 - 2.1.4. ...then the second meeting...25
 - 2.1.5. ...and ensure continuity25
 - 2.1.6. A participative organisation involving all stakeholders.....27
 - 2.1.7. Inform, mobilise, solicit external stakeholders27
 - 2.2. Posture shifts originating from experimentations28
- 3. Summary: recommendations30

Introduction

European project ORA (www.projetora.eu) was carried out in the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci-Innovation Transfer program from November 2011 to December 2013. The project aimed at opening professional opportunities for disabled persons and better assist them through occupational guidance. This is to be achieved via territorial network-based work on securing the persons' professional paths, on supervising staff's professional practices and on making mentalities evolve where persons with disabilities would be considered as capable persons by valuing their skills and encouraging close interaction between an accessible and inclusive educational and occupational training system and the workplace.

ORA's philosophy comes from works previously conducted by project groups DROA (Développement des Réseaux pour l'Orientation Active), AQOR (Amélioration de la Qualité en Orientation) and DAQOR (Développement pour l'Amélioration de la Qualité en Orientation) as well as from the transfer of these projects' methodology by the University of South Brittany (Bretagne-Sud).

Target publics of the ORA project:

- Persons with disabilities (regardless of the disability) able to work and with no professional qualifications
- Supervising staff whose mission consists of assisting disabled persons in and toward employment.

Project **objectives**:

- Develop an active guidance process serving the inclusion of persons with disabilities by placing them at the heart of this lifelong guidance device
- Make the stakeholders of the network serving the inclusion of persons with disabilities visible and complementary
- Professionalise the pedagogical supervisors / professionals by thinking and exchanging on their guidance and training practices for disabled persons.

Project **partners**:

- European Think Tank Pour la Solidarité – Belgium (www.pourlasolidarite.eu)
- Walloon federation of adapted-work enterprises – Belgium (www.eweta.be)

- University of South Brittany (Bretagne-Sud) – France (www.univ-ubs.fr)
- Association of parents and friends of people with intellectual disabilities of Valenciennes (APEI du Valenciennois) – France (www.apei-valenciennes.com)
- Institutions and services assistance by work (ESAT) of the French association for the paralysed (APF) “Les Ateliers du Haut Vinage” – France (www.apf.asso.fr)
- Ploiesti Petrol-Gas University – Romania (www.upg-ploiesti.ro)
- PODKREPA Labour Confederation – Bulgaria (www.podkrepa.org).

In this framework, each partner set up and managed a local network (local workgroup) and coordinated local experimental actions. Those meetings brought together: persons with disabilities, insertion structures, guidance and training structures, specific assistance structures for disabled persons, institutional partners (States, territories...) as well as associative partners.

Experimentations were put in place so that each and everyone's freedom of expression and active participation would become operational reality and not just general principles disconnected from field reality.

This approach enabled us to identify key success factors to implement active guidance of persons with disabilities. Such key factors are presented in this European guide which objective is to allow professionals to carry out active guidance solutions for disabled persons in a given context: how to proceed if I want to introduce the ORA process on my territory.

Content of this guide:

- ORA project process to promote and implement an active guidance approach for persons with disabilities in Europe
- Main key success factors to encourage active guidance of persons with disabilities
- Guide to implement an active guidance process for disabled persons across a territory
- Posture shifts to adopt
- European recommendations.

1. ORA project's approach

This part describes the approach followed by the ORA project to promote and carry out an active guidance process for persons with disabilities in Europe. It also gives a summary of the project's achievements.

1.1. Active guidance

The common definition of guidance shared by all ORA partners quotes the text from European Union Council's Resolution of 21 November 2008 (2008/319/02):

"A continuous process that enables citizens of all ages and throughout their whole life to determine their capacities, competences and interests, to make decisions in terms of education, training and employment as well as to manage their personal life path in education and training, in the workplace and in any other environment where such capacities and competences can be acquired and used. Guidance includes individual or collective activities relevant to information, counselling, skills reviews, assistance and teaching of skills required for decision making and career management".

Active guidance must necessarily place users at the heart of the process. Occupational projects identified for each user must be "their own" project, it must fit with the person's wishes –expressed freely and knowledgeably- and ensure the person's welfare¹.

At the start of the project, the consortium identified a number of proceedings deemed essential for the purpose of active guidance and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Those are set out in European ORA brochure entitled "*Common culture of the active guidance notion in the context of disability*":

- Lifelong guidance
- The disabled person and their network of stakeholders-supervisors at the heart of the guidance device: take the person's word into account, enable them to choose freely and prepare them to decide for themselves
- Equal access to services for all
- Inclusion – Full participation in social life

¹ European Brochure ORA: "*Common culture of the active guidance notion in the context of disability*", 2012.

- Network-based work.

1.2. ORA project process: creating and managing local networks and groups

To constitute local ORA project partner networks and groups, each partner set up and managed a local network called "local workgroup". Those meetings brought together: persons with disabilities, insertion structures, guidance and training structures, specific assistance structures for disabled persons, institutional partners (States, regional and local authorities...) as well as associative partners. Implementing such networks was a key component of the ORA process.

Over the 2-year period when the work took place (2011-2013), work meetings were organised based on the progress made, the themes the local groups (Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Romania) wanted to address and the persons joining the thinking process. We therefore organised:

- "Ordinary" meetings with the whole group with an agenda and a set of expectations sent beforehand to enable partners' involvement.
- "Thematic" meetings where, for example, we invited only disabled persons, their families, professionals specialised in a particular area (specialised education or not, adult education, professional insertion in conventional environments...), enterprises based on the territory...
- Individual interviews based on the wishes and possibilities of the persons contacted: this allowed us to inform them on the progression of the project, to get their opinion and/or to have them validate elements requiring their expertise. The chairperson could then forward the information collected to the local group in the following meeting.
- Punctual meetings in limited groups if more specific work was required and difficult to achieve in a plenary meeting. Certain workgroup members were keen on such small-committee work sessions in order to progress faster in certain areas.
- Telephone conferences.

Throughout the whole project, local workgroups remained open to people wishing to join. The team from University South Brittany (Bretagne-Sud) also remained available to support the efforts of the workgroups if required.

Transnational meetings were held bringing together all ORA partners. Held every four months, those meetings allowed partners to exchange with local group representatives, to put forward strengths and best practices, to think jointly on the possibilities to make the actions sustainable or on the way to carry them out when there were hurdles to overcome, etc. This methodology allowed us to make the seminars more fruitful and full of learning.

1.3. Interaction between field work and reflexions at European level

Throughout the ORA project, it was important to inform the local workgroup -on a regular basis- of:

- Progress made at European level
- Partnership productions (reports, internet sites, brochures...)
- Information collected on other partner countries' guidance processes
- Existing best practices
- Issues encountered.

Progress made within the local groups was regularly reported to the European partners especially:

- In transnational meetings work sessions could be dedicated to follow-up and information exchange
- When sending the minutes of local group meetings when they were held.

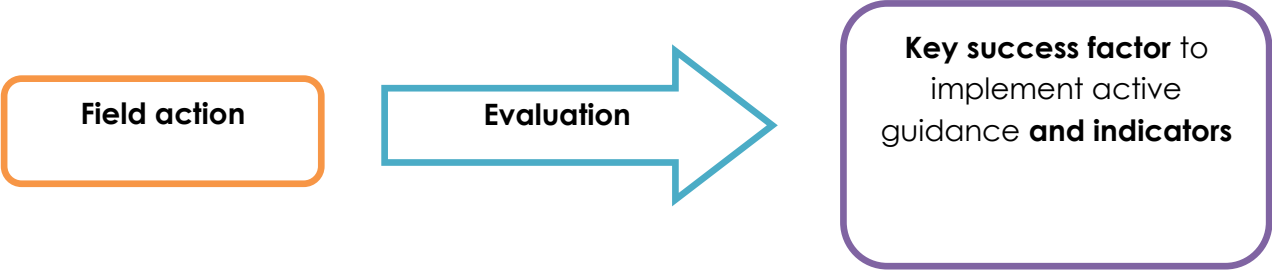
Each and everyone could then inspire from the work of other groups to enhance their own thinking efforts. It was also rewarding for the local groups to see that their work could be useful at other levels.

Local group participants could also attend transnational meeting throughout the course of the project.

1.4. Experimentation process overview

Over the two-year period the project lasted, each partner set up one or several "ORA workshops". The objective of these experimentation workshops was to carry out local actions and pick out key success factors to implement active guidance solutions for persons with disabilities.

The method consisted of using field experience to identify key success factors to implement an active orientation system via an assessment process proposed by Liliane Esnault, external evaluator of the ORA project.



Key success factors were then re-discussed and exemplified in the local workgroup to make them transferable.



The evaluation process (see box "Evaluation Process") contributed to ensuring the quality and relevance of the key success factors featured in this guide.

Evaluation process

In agreement with the ORA project's general evaluation process, the external evaluator has proposed a field action evaluation process that would be:

Participative: it relies on the active participation of all stakeholders concerned.

Longitudinal: it takes place throughout the whole action to be evaluated; that is to say that, as much as possible, it is interesting to get appreciations in the long run; it makes it possible to influence the process and improve things if need be, on the one hand, while it also gives the possibility to compare viewpoints at different moments and therefore measure progress.

Formative: because it is a long-term process, the evaluation therefore becomes a source of learning (i.e. of knowledge and skills enhancement) for all stakeholders.

Appreciative: the main evaluation criterion is the stakeholders' appreciation, that is to say the points of views (argued, justified, documented, etc.) they have on what happens; stakeholders have the legitimacy to give opinions, they are the first concerned and involved, it is in their best interest that the action is as successful as possible and thus create more short, medium and long-term value; their point of view is pertinent and therefore likely to generate and support suitable recommendations.

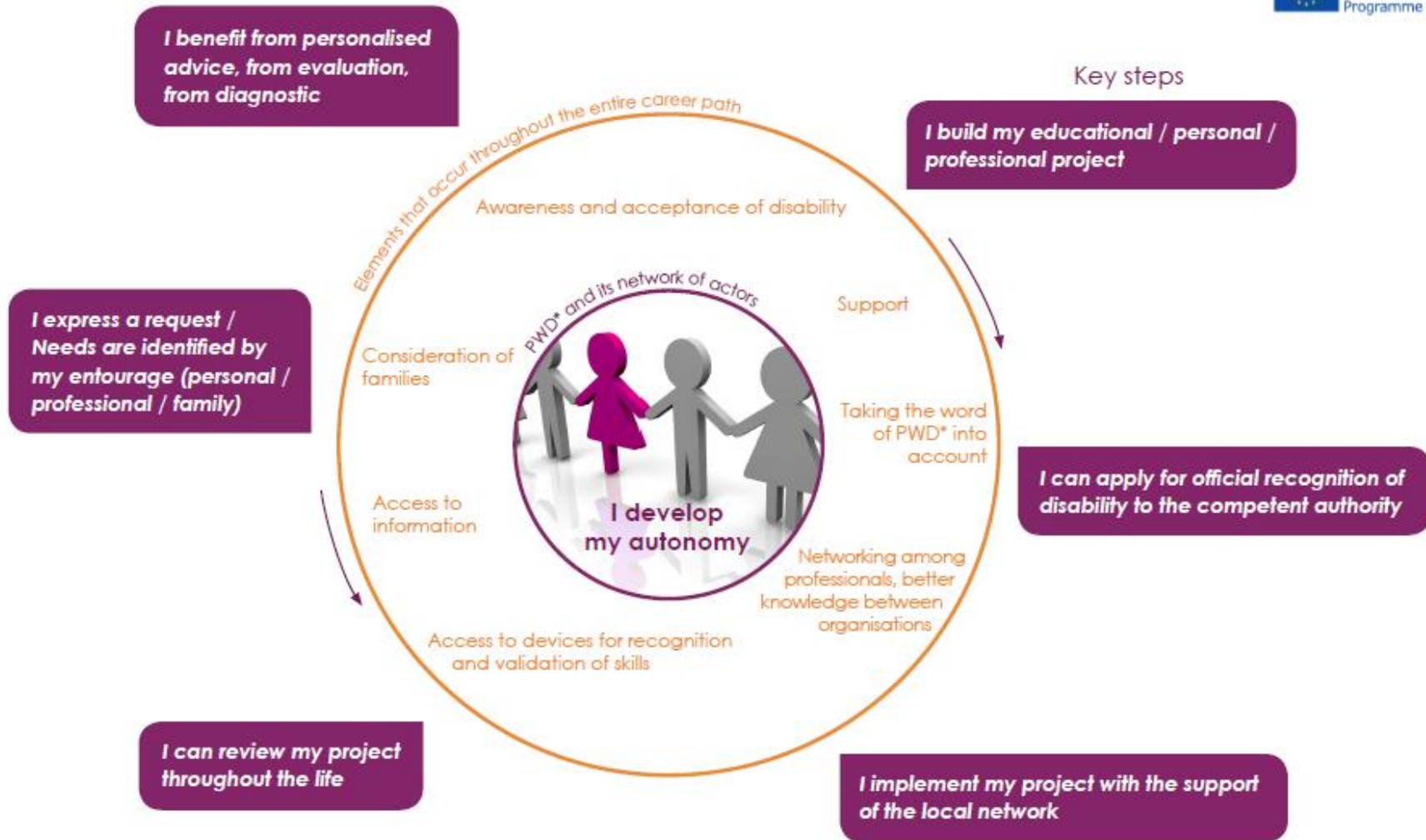
Experimentations relied on a process designed in the framework of the project and validated by the consortium: the process, drawn up by the University Bretagne-Sud (UBS) within the course of workgroup efforts identifies six essential key steps in the guidance paths of disabled persons (see diagram on next page). Each ORA workshop chose one or several key steps from the diagram as a starting point for experimentation.

ORA – DIAGRAM OF THE KEY STEPS OF LIFELONG ACTIVE GUIDANCE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

NB1: Continuing professionalisation of educational specialist /professionals is essential for quality support of PWD

NB2: None of steps is mandatory and roundtrips between steps are possible.

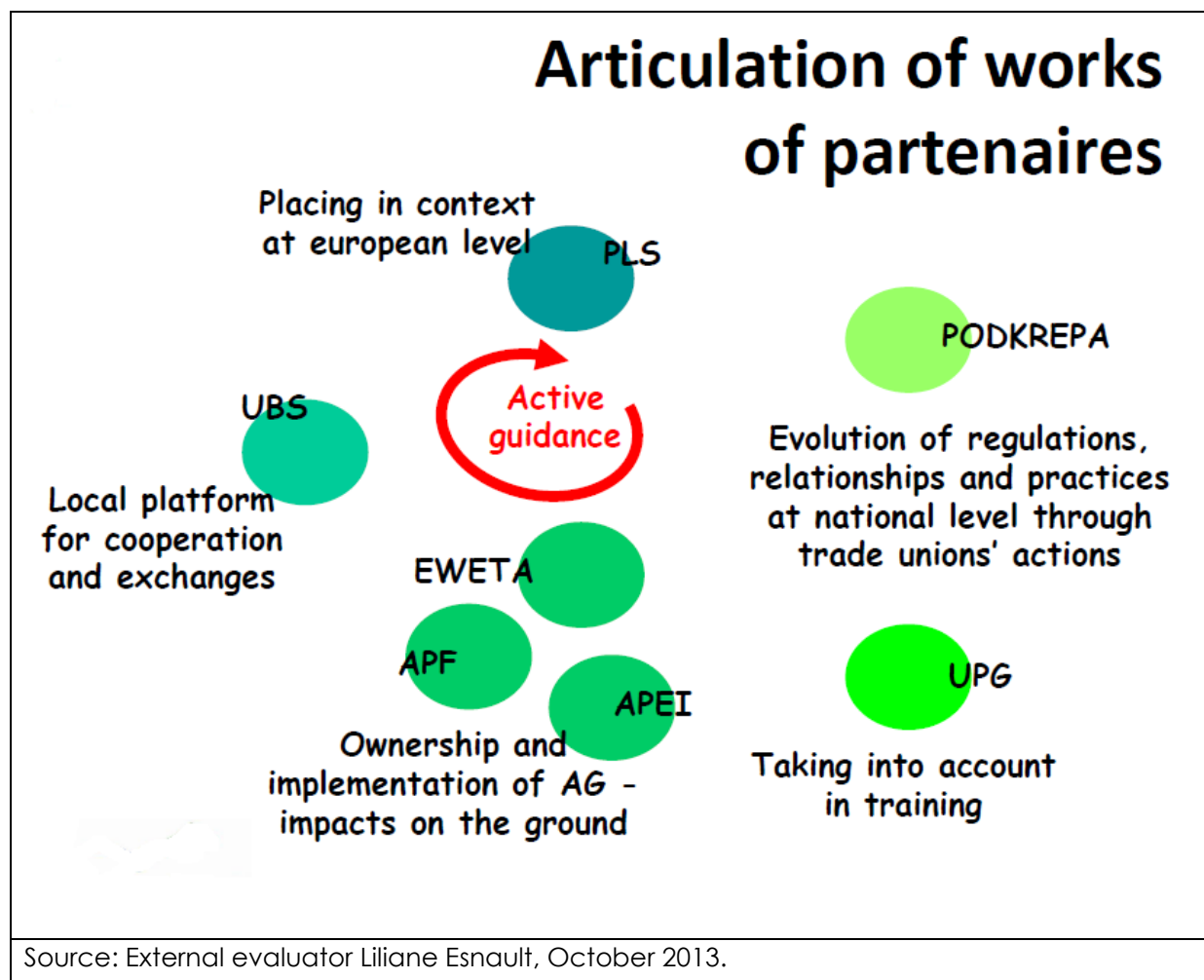
NB3: This pattern may change during the project.



* PWD: Person with disability

1.5. Summary of local ORA experimentations

Depending on the local context and partners, selected experimentations met various objectives and took different forms:



Each partner's experimentations relied on one or several key steps for the improvement of lifelong active guidance of persons with disabilities (Cf. ORA key steps diagram). Upon common agreement, it was decided that each and everyone's experimentations would enable the initiation or observation of successful emerging practices in the active guidance of persons with disabilities. The final objective being to provide a certain number of key elements that could be considered as best practices in the lifelong active guidance of persons with disabilities.

In such context, the **APEI du Valenciennois** implemented three experimentations:

- The first one entitled 'I learn from my desires' consisted of setting up personalised guidance programs (Institut médico-éducatif (IME) la Cigogne)
- The second consisted of analysing the guidance path of workers operating within an ESAT (Ateliers du Hainaut) in order to appraise –among others- the field experience validation process
- Finally, the third experimentation consisted of analysing the guidance path of a person assisted by a social and vocational insertion service (SISEP).

The APEI recreated a network which existed before and gathered various services destined to persons with disabilities. The ORA experimentations were put in place with three young persons to better identify what worked well and what needed improvement by confronting the views of the professionals with those of the workers. The APEI's ORA local group then met to think out how to improve what came out of the interviews in terms of hindrances and difficulties.

As for the **University of South Brittany (Bretagne-Sud)** (UBS), the experimentation consisted of the methodology from the AQOR and DAQOR projects to create a network dedicated to the active guidance of persons with disabilities. Over a two-year period, monthly meetings were held with a broad and open network representing disability, training, guidance and employment structures in the Lorient area. The group developed a common professional culture, organised several events (site visits), produced a diagram to formalise the active guidance "course" for a disabled person. The group also conducted interviews with disabled persons, families and supervising staff to analyse the guidance process. The group also made their best efforts to launch a general and specialised digital platform to be integrated into a device dedicated to the active guidance process and guidance-related information for persons with disabilities in the Lorient area. The platform will also offer the possibility to propose practice-sharing opportunities and resources for the professionalization of supervising staff. The great benefit resulting from the ORA project and experimentations is the creation of this network which allowed everyone to better work together and better know what each and everyone does. Further to the ORA project, a collaborative platform will remain -bringing together as many people as possible- to facilitate information to disabled persons, enterprises, supervising staff and families. All publics are concerned. The ONISEP hosted the platform on its website with a new angle: "education and disability".

Ploiesti Petrol-Gaz University's (UPG) experimentation dealt with overall guidance at university level: UPG surveyed the various actions carried out by the structures concerned as per active guidance of persons with disabilities and identified areas of improvement. The key success factors identified are: call centre, certification, instruction, contribution of class experience to daily-life reality, resource evaluation, training and valuing of human resources, follow-up of guided clients, permanent client information and practical training courses to get to know various trades.

PODKREPA Labour Confederation, for its part, organised meetings which object was to analyse actions from several structures around three key steps of active guidance: 'I benefit from personalised advice, from evaluation, 'I build my educational/personal/professional project' and 'I implement my project'. From the five local experimentations conducted in Bulgaria, PODKREPA identified four key success factors to improve active guidance of persons with disabilities in their local guide: assisting and supporting disabled persons when building their initial project, favour the construction of a consistent path, achieve successful integration with the teams in place and create discovery opportunities for enterprises, workstations, while preventing gaps from appearing along the path.

Choice of experimentations carried out by the **Walloon federation of adapted-work enterprises** (EWETA) in collaboration with the **European Think Tank Pour la Solidarité** (PLS) covered four key steps. This choice was based on the wish to identify and assess actions from all local Belgian partners through as many key steps as possible to improve lifelong active guidance of persons with disabilities. The objective consisted of identifying active guidance levers within institutions/local ORA workgroup members. The target public was as wide as possible: students, job seekers, workers in employment or in reconversion processes aged 18 to 60 years old. Four key ideas arose as pillars to improve active guidance: active listening of persons and professionals, motivation/will, significance of activating local socio-professional stakeholders and time of professionals and persons requesting assistance.

Finally, the thinking efforts produced by the Etablissement et Service d'Aide par le Travail (ESAT) of the '**Association des Paralysés de France** (APF) "Les Ateliers du Haut Vinage" led to the creation of a new tool enabling ESAT users to refine and clarify their guidance choices. This action named "employability review" came supporting the existing procedures within the structure. The latter enabled a thinking process to take place and formalise the assistance provided to the persons present in the Pôle

ESAT while exchanges with external ESAT partners favoured the following for each and every assisted person:

- Awareness of acquired skills and know-how as well as a reality check on their professional path
- Food for thoughts on their guidance choices (defining or deepening) and project feasibility
- Definition of guidance axes and actions to be carried out toward the achievement of their future project.

In terms of impact, APF's employability reviews will continue after the completion of the ORA project. Moreover, work was conducted around an essential prerequisite to active guidance of disabled persons: training of supervising staff.

Further to the experimentations, each partner drew up an experimentation and evaluation report made up of the objectives, descriptions (stakeholders, contacts, practices observed), proceeding, evaluation (satisfaction, lessons learned) and finally recommendations on each action carried out.

1.6. Cashing in at European level: key success factors

Further to experimentations conducted in the framework of the ORA project, partner organisations have identified **eight main key success factors** along with indicators and actions put in place to implement active guidance solutions for persons with disabilities. These key success factors also stand as a set of recommendations at European level to carry out active guidance.

1

Take time to implement “capacity prognoses”

Indicators...

- Number of interviews and duration
- Support provided
- Number of “discovery courses” provided
- Persons are satisfied, they relate positively to the assistance process, feel considered, listened to, helped
- Persons express desires

Encourage active listening by creating places for exchange where the persons can express their desires and wishes.

In France, the persons express and discuss their wishes with the professionals to draw up a personalised project. Within the course of EWETA's experimentation, professionals were satisfied of having taken the time to discuss with the persons. This allowed them to gain new knowledge of the assisted persons' desires and wishes.

Take the person into account as a whole. Allow time to welcome the person so that contact can be established between all relevant stakeholders including the person assisted.

EWETA suggests implementing a comprehensive file of the person, such as a “portfolio” which would be under the person's ownership.

The ESAT Ateliers du Hainaut allows a 6-month welcome period before drawing up the individualised personal project.

Trigger desire. Allow discovery of various trades by assisting the person through this discovery course.

The UPG and APEI's services and establishments organise job discovery courses within protected labour environments (ESAT) or conventional ones (adapted enterprises, public or private enterprises...) or in conventional workplaces.

Assess employability: capacities, aptitudes, competences, motivations, interpersonal skills.

The APF assists the persons in conducting their employability reviews in connection with a training organisation and a pluridisciplinary team. The person makes a reality check on their professional path by evaluating acquired skills, interpersonal skills, know how, etc., and defines or deepens their guidance choices and project feasibility.

Reinforce assisted persons' motivation and will by nurturing mutual trust relations and self-esteem

Indicators...

- Motivation and assiduity at work increases
- Number of immersion courses completed
- General atmosphere is good, peers help each other
- Assisted persons show more ambition, express their desires, have longer-term perspectives

Enable self confidence to build up, work on others' perception

Experimentations conducted by the APEI Valenciennes and Podkrepa have highlighted that the psychological hurdles pursuant to access to employment among disabled workers can be overcome via personal development and self-confidence building workshops such as arts workshops, oral expression workshops...

Encourage exchange and collaborative work between persons with disabilities

Peer emulation can have a "snowball" effect. The APF and EWETA hold discussion group sessions within specialised establishments. Persons can exchange on their experience, share ideas, overcome fears...

Take interpersonal affinities into account in the supervisor-supervisee relation

Both within the IME and EWETA, the mutual trust relation between the "job-coach" and the PWD was identified as a significant element: the assisted person is even more motivated when they feel confident and trusted.

Value acquired skills to reinforce motivation throughout the entire path

Regularly assess the person's aptitudes so they can witness their progress. An assisted person can be asked to pass on some knowledge or help their peers if they have the capacity to do so. Persons can change position if they make progress.

Support efforts with comprehensive assistance. Work in connection with the families and social environment which play a significant role in the person's motivation

Assist the person by taking the medical, social and psychological dimensions into account. In the EWETA, the persons have testified the significance of the support from their social environment in their guidance process.

Assist the construction of a personalised project by enabling multiple and diversified paths

Indicators...

- Persons hold jobs more sustainably
- They feel like they decide for themselves, they have the choice
- Professionals feel that they give a purpose to the assistance process

Inform the person; give them examples of possible paths and itineraries

ESATs assist persons through the achievement of their professional and social project: the persons catered are offered the opportunity of working in ESATs, in conventional workplaces, to get training or have their field experience validated...

Open access to a range of enterprises with situational scenarios

The SISEP-APEI du Valenciennois and IME la Cigogne public, private, conventional or adapted companies based on the projects of the persons assisted.

The UPG has also set up a network for the same purpose.

Make project hypotheses and confront them to reality to build an ambitious and realistic project

The APF and SISEP-APEI provide assistance aimed at finding the anchor point between the person's aptitudes, centres of interest and professional opportunities. For example, in-company immersion courses allow persons to try things in order to confirm the project or not, to spot out the spark.

Ensure persons are followed up, allow them to go back and forth

Implementing a support agreement in the ESAT APEI de Valenciennes enables the person to "take the risk" of leaving the establishment to explore conventional environments and get their place back in ESAT if required.

4

Work together and work as a network

Indicators...

- An increasing number of agreements and sustainable partnerships
- A diversity of sectors of activity recruiting persons with disabilities
- Professionals' satisfaction, feeling of being supported

Implement coordination bodies acting as local observatories

Such bodies can make sure the service offer is consistent across a given territory and measure the effects of public policies. In France, such bodies exist on defined territories based on the employment area.

Create places for local stakeholders to meet, better know each other and facilitate the creation of gateways

For the EWETA, the role of AWIPH sub-regional committees turned out to be significant and favourable to implementing a local think group on active guidance. This local group allows local stakeholders to better know each other and therefore better guide the persons assisted.

Organising meetings such as exchange days on disability and employment enables better mutual knowledge.

Coordinate supply and demand

In Romania, the UPG has introduced a permanent watch of employment offer/demand with a workshop entitled "I am a resource so I am needed". This workshop's objective is to confirm the social and professional situation of assisted persons.

PODKREPA organises counselling meetings with union experts on the needs of the job market.

Introduce tools to communicate on territorial resources

The UBS has introduced a digital platform listing all network stakeholders, useful information, best practice sharing opportunities...

Enable access to conventional environment enterprises and services

Indicators...

- Number of training courses provided around disability and accessibility
- Number of companies having carried out training actions
- Changes in the perceptions of disability
- Number of persons with disabilities admitted in conventional workplaces
- Feeling of having the same rights as everyone else, of having the choice
- Feeling supported, moral welfare of persons assisted
- Feeling of being the "author of your own life"
- Number of persons requesting conventional services

Support mobility

At the IME la Cigogne-APEI de Valenciennes, access to employment comes with a training program on mobility.

Enable access to information for all by adapting communication mediums to the different disability types

The UPG has set up a "call centre" to inform persons at any given time

Coordinate social-medical establishments and services with external resources

Institutional opening in all areas of daily life (sports, culture or leisure for example) generate potential for meetings, knowledge and inclusion in citizens' life.

Work with families if required

At the IME la Cigogne, discussing with families made it possible to overcome fears, reluctances or otherwise give clues

Train and inform on accessibility

Hold meetings in conventional enterprises so they can get familiar with legal obligations and possible arrangements to improve accessibility.

Raise awareness of conventional-environment populations on disability, change mentalities

Persons with disabilities can play an active role by giving testimonies in meetings with conventional-environment stakeholders.

Favour autonomy, “cope with” to reinforce motivation

Indicators...

- Skills are transferred to other areas
- Persons gain assurance, take initiatives

Help in the various procedures involving the person as much as possible (do with)

When looking for a placement, for example, guide the person to prospect enterprises, explain how to establish contact while maintaining the follow-up.

Involve the person in their follow-up and assessment

Introduce self-assessment tools and involve the assisted in performance reviews for example.

Inform persons of their rights existing devices, aids...

EWETA: organisation of thematic information days enabling better visibility of insertion opportunities for the person faced with the labour environment.

Inform the person assisted of the procedure and steps to follow. Allow the person to find their position in the process, in their project's progression

Project planning must be presented and explained to the person.

Enable ownership of employability assessment tools

The APF has worked jointly with a training organisation to create a self-assessment tool for employability.

Enable lifelong skills development and valuing

Indicators...

- Number of training courses adapted to various disability types
- Number of disabled graduates
- Number of persons recruited in conventional workplaces

Enable lifelong learning by implementing certified training courses adapted to a wide diversity of disabilities

Podkrepa designs personalised training plans and recommends requalification initiatives: flexible distance or "on-line" learning possibilities.

In France, for example, CFAS degrees (specialised apprentice training certificates) allow persons with disabilities to get professional aptitude certification and therefore be recognised on the labour market.

Enable access to certified training courses

This requires specialised assistance on common rights devices. For example, in France, field experience validation assistance facilitates access to employment.

Allow employability reviews to take place throughout the person's entire lifecycle

Persons can be assisted -as it is the case with the APF- in conducting employability reviews at any age.

Diversify the offer of adapted training across territories, links with professional opportunities

Proximity makes services more accessible to mobility-impaired persons

Assist supervising staff

Indicators...

- Number of discussion groups and events put in place
- Feeling of team work and support among professionals
- Development of common terminology and practices
- Serenity when questioning practices
- Feeling of being valued and recognised in the work
- Feeling of being listened to among persons

Allow consolidation of experiences – Value best practices

Arranging seminars and workshop days allows professionals to question practices with their peers, to work on a professional culture and to get out of isolation where professionals can sometimes find themselves.

Enable persons to express themselves within assistance services

Implementing discussion groups and training sessions within establishments and services provides tools for professionals, allows them to adjust assistance measures, avoid inconsistent or contradictory situations between members of a same team.

Assess assistance services by adopting a progress-based approach

Having an appreciative, formative and participative evaluation system throughout the whole project allows professionals to play an active part in the assistance process and to more easily challenge practices.

At the EWETA, reference supervising staff is trained on “active listening”. Conclusion: active listening from trained professionals has a positive impact on the person. Persons feel they are listened to and understood.

2. Guide to carry out an active guidance process for persons with disabilities across a territory

In this part, the work achieved in the course of the ORA project is translated in the form of advice to successfully carry out an active guidance process.

2.1. Create and manage local stakeholders networks around a common federative project

Efforts of local networks are an essential component to successful active guidance. From this perspective, having local groups work together involves several steps.

2.1.1. Identify stakeholders concerned

To make up a relevant local group and get the members to sign on quickly, it is advised to:

- Make phone contact: resource persons from the network dealing with disability policies and concerned by guidance practices (this can add up to a very small number of people)
- In parallel, and in the framework of the project, organise exchange with the project team via e-mail or by phone. When dealing with a local group, this kind of assistance must be prepared beforehand and a reference person must be appointed
- Meet with the resource person(s) to outline contextual details of the project and actions expected.

2.1.2. Find a resource person

Appointing a **resource person** is key. Their role is to help make a list of all essential partners on the territory concerned by the experimentation. They will also help draw up a roadmap to get the adhesion of an effective network to the project approach. They will therefore help define a strategy to make the project work across the territory concerned. They can even help target the most relevant territory.

Who is the resource person?

They know the territory, the field, the policies and legislation around the project's theme. They are able to provide up-to-date information on disability-related matters, on occupational issues persons with disabilities are faced with and on lifelong guidance practices. They are able to summarise general needs that can be observed across a territory concerned by the project.

Before bringing a network of partners together, short presentation meetings prior to the project may be required with certain partners.

2.1.3. Hold a successful first meeting...

A few documents are to be prepared for the **first local group meeting**:

- Project sheet
- Detailed presentation of what active guidance is, of what is to be achieved within the local group, of a possible operating mode, of the fact that agreement must be reached on practical achievements
- Detailed agenda sent to the whole group.

In the first meeting, go around the table so that all participants know who's who. Discussion is free. The facilitator must allow participants to express themselves while sticking to the philosophy of the project.

It is advised to have a session secretary to take the minutes. The last 15 minutes of the meeting must be dedicated to preparing the next meeting: location, date, people to invite and work to be done in the meantime if applicable. Objective of the next meeting must be mentioned.

The network-based action to be achieved is built gradually. There is no practical action to present to the partners in the first meeting. The group made up of all participants defines together the needs relevant to the territory and common issues. This will allow participants to determine the implementation of a common action in the second stage.

2.1.4. ...then the second meeting...

At the end of the first meeting, participants leave with documents. In the **second meeting**, a first feedback will be asked from the partners on the indicators process. What conclusion(s)?

If adhesion fails to occur, the facilitator will drive discussions in order to enable the group to initiate talks around guidance process description and related competencies. To launch and facilitate local network discussions and to try and come up with common issues, a list of questions can help the facilitator:

- Regarding the **public assisted**:
 - What representation of the public's expectations do you have in terms of lifelong guidance? Do you have any information on the public's opinion as per guidance services they are provided with (survey results)?
 - How can we determine and prognostic that a person requires guidance?
 - How would you evaluate practices in terms of guidance-related quality and perception within your institutions / structures?

- Regarding **guidance professionals**:
 - In your opinion, which priority skills are required to enhance the quality of the service provided to users?
 - If you were to recruit a guidance counsellor, what would your priorities be?
 - What do we all have in common?
 - Could you describe the operating mode ("styles", operational specificities) within the structures / institutions represented by a participant in the local group?

2.1.5. ...and ensure continuity

Work of local groups cover the whole duration of the project, two years if possible, as it was the case for the ORA project (2011-2013). This period of time is rather long and requires significant involvement from participants. It is important to make the group's work sustainable and go beyond the set objectives by producing something common which would prove useful to all group members and meet one or several needs identified on the territory.

It is therefore advised, as early as the third or fourth meeting, to regularly address the question of the common achievement that will be put in place by the end of the project. This common achievement is not planned beforehand and must be decided by the group as meetings and progress comes. It can allow the group to:

- Meet a specific need
- Communicate about the work carried out by the network over the duration of the project
- Raise awareness of certain target publics
- Reinforce practitioner network and induce motivation serving continuity of the work.

And it can take different forms:

- Guide-type deliverable (or other common project)
- Map of structures operating in the guidance process of disabled persons across the territory
- Internet providing comprehensive information of the guidance process of disabled persons
- Organisation of a forum, conference, public debate...
- Awareness-raising action organised a structure from the group
- Any idea arising from the group and achievable within the time at hand.

Depending on the territories, the structures making up the group or pre-existing needs, the work carried out across the territories can materialise different ways:

- Organisation of meetings gathering professionals (common rights or specialised) interested in taking part in a think group on lifelong active guidance of persons with disabilities
- Implementation of a collaboration with one or several structures to meet a specific need identified on the territory
- Organisation of work meetings on the "Indicators Guide" tool from the indicators grid to be adapted to the context of disability².

² AQOR Guide available at: <http://www-fc.univ-ubs.fr/le-projet-aqor-315026.kjsp?RH=1305550250325>

Whatever the way the workgroups carry out their efforts, it is important to always keep in mind that the work done must always originate from field observations and meet actual needs expressed by the participants. That is why the facilitator must constantly listen carefully to the workgroup during meetings to identify the existing needs or collect ideas from the group on the common achievement.

If possible, it is advised to vary the location of the meetings to gain better ownership of the professional environment of the persons we visit. Each participant can, in turn, offer to hold a meeting on their premises. Before starting a meeting, a tour of the site / structure may be organised.

Working as a network involves a clear determination to collaborate, to be available, to be eager to work together and to encourage the improvement of one's own professional practices: "Do differently".

2.1.6. A participative organisation involving all stakeholders

When carrying out active guidance solutions, it is capital to get the participation of all stakeholders, including persons with disabilities and their families. This participative operating mode is the added value of the local group; it allows participants to decide jointly what the objectives are and how to operate. Through free discussion initiatives, it also allows stakeholders to put their activity and structure forward and to aim for an individual and collective progress approach. Each local group will have its own specificities since each network might be faced with different issues.

2.1.7. Inform, mobilise, solicit external stakeholders

Local group facilitators are advised to maintain links between partners: one of their roles is therefore to reactivate, remind, send e-mail messages, inform, motivate... They should be able to provide relevant information updates as meetings take place (new reference texts available, new legislations, etc.).

The action to be carried out by the local group aims at improving the quality of the services provided to users. Beyond this action to be conducted by the local group, the process itself acts as a quality driver. It has an impact on the professionals gathered for the purpose. It contributes to upgrading everyone's practices serving users.

Finally, individual investment is as significant as the structures' investment. We need to communicate with decision makers and political representatives to be supported and position the project and pursuant actions in an up-to-date context. This will also be a motivation factor for local group participants as well as a factor to value the group's work. All progress factors are important.

2.2. Posture shifts originating from experimentations

This notion of "shift" comes from the methodology work of Bernard Dumas and Michel Séguier entitled "*Construire des actions collectives, développer des solidarités*"³ (*building collective actions, developing solidarities*).

The concept of "shift" is used by the authors to report a change in the logic of interventions in an evolving context. It highlights a certain number of criteria enabling assessment of transformations carried out in collective and social practices.

In the field of disabilities, since the 1970's, we have been observing some evolution in the definition of the term 'disability' and in the place of persons with disabilities in societies. Such evolution translates into certain changes in terms of practice and disability management.

The implementation of active orientation keeps challenging practices and can be characterised by a certain number of shifts:

"The term 'shift' is preferred here to the notions of 'contractions' or 'poles' in order to highlight –from a dialectic perspective- the fact that there is a change in the intervention logic between the two terms and therefore a shift from one to the other and the insistence is placed on this shift" (B. Dumas, M. Séguier, 2010).

The authors consider "analysing the shifts" as an assessment tool enabling professionals to position themselves against these evolution axes, to identify the changes made at different levels (attitudes, behaviours, structures) or to imagine potential changes.

The table below shows the posture shifts induced by the implementation of active guidance solutions for persons with disabilities as identified by the ORA project partners:

³ Dumas B., Séguier D., *Construire des Actions collectives, Développer des Solidarités*, Chroniques Sociales, 2010

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| From a disabled person "subject" (to a diagnosis, to a classification, etc.) | Capacitation → | To a person acting on their future |
| From a diagnosis based on disability-related incapacities, on difficulties or lacks | Potential → | To a prognosis based on the person's development capacities and potentials, strengths |
| From punctual analysis at a given time (diagnosis) | Temporality / Quality → | To the implementation of lifelong assistance relying on a network organisation |
| From a short-term results logic | Project → | To a quality process based on sustainable results |
| From a response limited to existing dynamics, from guidance that follows a sector-based logic toward specialised structures and protected environments | Partnerships → | To unlocking situations by setting up partnerships and new solutions relying on human and technical support |
| From prescriptive intervention orienting people toward existing sectors | Exploration / Initiative → | To the search for new solutions, path selection |
| From a passive team member, from a role of executant | Communication and interpersonal relations → | To active listening and assertive expression capacities |
| From a response to active guidance-related hurdles with specialised and protected structures | Inclusive approach to disability → | To taking disability into account in all public policy areas |

3. Summary: recommendations

This part summarises ORA project recommendations aimed at promoting and carrying out active guidance processes for persons with disabilities in Europe. Local works have enabled the emergence of general principles. Those principles serve as a base for European recommendations set out in the framework of the project "ORA: Orienter Autrement" (Guide Differently).

1. **Support the creation and management of local pluridisciplinary stakeholder networks serving active guidance.** The role and added value of a local network is paramount when implementing active guidance solutions.

Steered by a resource body, the local network makes it possible to:

- Assess the local dynamic, look after the development and equal distribution of resources across the territory e. In this respect, the local network can guide or impulse the development of local actions
- Ensure informative watch thanks to total visibility of territorial resources. It centralises and disseminates information, collects requests, guides persons toward existing services and creates information tools on territorial resources available
- Facilitate, impulse and improve the partnership dynamic over the territory. It allows stakeholders to meet, share experiences, highlight common issues and fins responses jointly.
- Coordinate supply and demand.

2. **Support quality assistance in an active guidance process.** Such assistance is to be provided in the long run at each and every project step: construction, implementation and review of the personal and professional project. It can be delivered by regular professional guidance services (as demonstrated by Romania's UPG and Bulgaria's PODKREPA) or by specialised services or establishments (as shown by France's APF and APEI or Belgium's EWETA). This assistance is meant to introduce an "active listening" process of beneficiaries and professionals. This process must be integrally carried out and actively involve the person when defining their project. This of course requires time to:

- Implement supervisor-supervisee concerting
- Collect all information required to assess the person's skills, knowledge, capacities... of the person

- Mobilise resources required to provide comprehensive support solutions
- Establish a mutual trust relation between stakeholders, encourage the assisted person's self-esteem and motivation
- Build a path which is both ambitious and realistic by finding the anchor point , between the person's aptitudes, centres of interest and professional opportunities
- Assist the person in defining their personal project, confront this project to reality for validation, allow the person to go back and forth
- Raise awareness, enable jobs discovery
- Meet territory's stakeholders and create partnerships to encourage a diversity of paths to be built
- Favour exchange among peers (assisted persons with disabilities) as shown in APF's "employability review" or with "peer emulation" by sharing experience namely by creating discussion groups as illustrated by the tool developed by the EWETA network in Belgium.
- Encourage autonomy by "doing with" and not "doing for", by informing, by creating tools allowing the person to make the process their own, by working on mobility, by accepting the right to make mistakes... This can be evidenced by the "employability review" tool introduced by APF's ESAT "Les Ateliers du Haut Vinage" in the framework of the ORA project.

The approaches above seem demanding but they are clearly not incompatible with performance requirements. On the contrary, they ensure the quality of results beneficial to all.

3. Support change in professional practices toward active guidance:

- Encourage establishments and services in implementing practice-sharing opportunities. ORA experimentations show that creating places for professionals to discuss allows them to improve practices and ensure team cohesion
- Support the organisation of seminars and workgroups over the territories to allow inter-structure experience sharing and work on a common culture
- Include the active guidance approach in the training programs of insertion/guidance/specialised education/occupational training professionals.

4. **Encourage access to conventional environments and take diversity into account in the fields of guidance, insertion and employment:**
 - By supporting awareness-raising, training and information initiatives on the specificities of different disabilities, legal obligations and accessibility
 - By supporting arrangement that can be put in place to allow proper integration in a quality environment as suggested in PODKREPA's conclusions
 - By making information accessible as suggested in UPG's actions
 - By supporting mobility-related actions
 - By supporting the implementation of partnerships between conventional and specialised environments in all areas of social life.
 - By supporting the active involvement of disabled persons in bodies working to improve accessibility in their environment.
5. **Encourage access to training and recognition of field acquisitions** by creating and diversifying the training offer and assistance devices on "micro-territories".
6. **Support implementation of inclusive partnership actions** in all daily life areas: sports, culture, leisure, citizenship... Such actions offer a dual benefit: they allow persons to develop self confidence, to get familiar with their environment, to work on autonomy and self confidence, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, they raise the awareness of conventional environment stakeholders through meetings and human adventure.
7. **Support inter-regional cooperation** in terms of resource-sharing and active guidance practices for persons with disabilities. Actions carried out by EWETA (Belgium) and APEI du Valenciennois (France) show the benefits resulting from this type of cooperation and synergy: the ORA project has initiated cross-border exchange of trainees and active guidance practices between the two organisations as well as co-participation in events dedicated to promoting employment for persons with disabilities.
8. **Enable progress:**
 - By encouraging **more quality-based assessment of employment policies** (appreciation of the persons, feeling of being listened to and recognised, supported in their efforts / for professionals: giving a purpose to their efforts...), on the **level of training, quality and sustainability of the jobs held** since the

number of recruitments per say does not say much about the sustainability of the jobs held and the quality of the assistance provided.

- By supporting **international cooperation and action-research in the field of active guidance**. Experience sharing between partners operating in specific contexts allows stakeholders to step back from local issues and have a broader view of solutions to be carried out and better foresight.

In the framework of European project ORA-Orienter Autrement (Guiding Differently), the project partners have drawn up this guide of recommendations to implement active guidance solutions for persons with disabilities.

This guide puts together the proceedings and summary of the works and recommendations of the ORA project, key success factors at European level as well as a guide and recommendations to carry out active guidance solutions for persons with disabilities across a territory.

The ORA project was led by a consortium of seven partner organisations established in four countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Romania) in the framework of the Leonardo da Vince-Transfert of Innovation programme, from November 2011 to December 2013. The project aimed to improve the active guidance process of persons with disabilities.

For more information, please contact ORA partners:

- European Think Tank Pour la Solidarité – Belgium (www.pourlasolidarite.eu)
- Walloon federation of adapted-work enterprises (EWETA) – Belgium (www.eweta.be)
- University of South Brittany (Bretagne-Sud) – France (www.univ-ubs.fr)
- Association of parents and friends of people with intellectual disabilities of Valenciennes (APEI du Valenciennois) – France (www.apei-valenciennes.com)
- Institutions and services assistance by work (ESAT) of the French association for the paralysed (APF) “Les Ateliers du Haut Vinage” – France (www.apf.asso.fr)
- Ploiesti Petrol-Gaz University – Romania (www.upg-ploiesti.ro)
- PODKREPA Labour confederation – Bulgaria (www.podkrepa.org)

Pour plus d'informations :

www.projetora.eu

