



INforEX

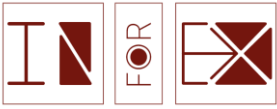
“Innovative ways of including low qualified ex offenders and ex prisoners to labour market”

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IO6

PILOT TRAINING GUIDELINES

(for employers)



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I. Purpose



As you know, the goal of the INforEX project is to create a new active and practical training methodology focusing on low qualified adult ex prisoners and ex offenders. The issue of training is closely related to the integration of low qualified adult ex prisoners and ex offenders into the labour market. INforEX tries to give an answer to a problem which has a clear European dimension and affects social inclusion and quality of life of a broad category of citizens in many EU member states.

We (project partners and entrepreneurs) are going to realize the pilot training courses. The activity consists of the organization and management of 6 pilot training paths (1 in each country involved), and of the finalization and standardization of the training methodology.

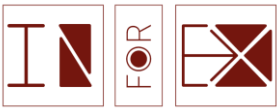
Given the fact that in each of the 6 participating countries 12 entrepreneurs will train 2 people each, INforEX will train and issue a certificate for 144 beneficiaries. This makes that a total of 144 trainees who will be formed through the pilot course. Employers (trainers) together with project partners will certify their skills obtained on the job training. A certificate of non-formal education will be issued to the trainee but the experience he / she will gain during the training period is even more valuable.

These piloting guidelines are for entrepreneurs (YOU) to successfully guide you through the pilot testing phase with low qualified ex offenders and ex prisoners.

At the end of the pilot training courses, we hope to get observations from you about the created methodology.

II. What do you have to know about the training methodology?

The training methodology and approach used with ex-offenders – who are the final beneficiaries of the project and the primary subject of the training - is the one of non-formal education and training. Non-formal education and training was defined as all education outside of the formal system (Rogers, 2004). According to Coombs and Ahmed (Rogers, 2004) its basic definition is ‘any organised, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal schooling system to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population, adult as well as children.’



The project's approach is also based on the 'Experiential Learning' theory (Kolb, 1984) which emphasizes the central role that experience plays in the learning process. The theory defines learning as 'the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience'.

Therefore, the training methodology used for the INforEX project was designed to actively engage participants in practical on the job training with employers, to ensure that trainees develop the relevant transferable skills that will make them employable and improve their life chances.

III. What do you have to know about this phase of project?

We are in the third stage of the project. In this stage the entrepreneurs [after you completed five days of training - Stage 2], begin on the job training with 2 ex-offenders according to the created training methodology. The skills training takes place over a period of 5 months and consists of 320 hours of training in total.

IV. What do you have to know about the certification?

The training methodology developed is aligned with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The EQF is a lifelong learning framework and covers all types of qualifications ranging from those acquired at the end of compulsory education (Level 1) to the highest qualifications such as Doctorate (Level 8). The training programme is aiming at level 3 of the EQF. In order to do so, partners have concluded that the training of final beneficiaries should consist of 320 hours over the period of 4-5 months. At the end of the training (the complete training is 320 hours but could be less depending on individual circumstances), the trainees are issued a certificate showing the particular skills they gained. In the event that the participant due to some particular reasons has not completed the whole training, he / she may be issued a certificate with only the skills for which the employer signed in his / her weekly / monthly report. The certificate can be uploaded to the European Skills Passport on Europass (<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>).

V. Whom you could consult?

After the selection of trainees in close cooperation with the project partner organisation the pilot training to test the created methodology will start. At its end the final beneficiaries (ex-offenders and ex-prisoners) will be submitted with the certificate. For each country 3 tutors from partner organisation will support the training activities of the 12 entrepreneurs by supervising and integrating the educational activity of the entrepreneurs as well as by sharing discussion and dialogues with the beneficiaries (trainees) so as to make



them internalise and fully accomplish the competencies on which they are working through the training path. Tutors at partner organisation help with the organization of training and relationship with trainees, consulting about filling of the documents, trying to solve the issues that might arise between the employer and final beneficiary.

VI. What is going to be assessed/ evaluated?

Each trainee will require a minimum amount of theoretical knowledge of the tasks to be performed, some practical and soft skills and work based competencies that will facilitate them to perform the task. All the trainees on each of the jobs will also require a general sense of responsibility and a certain grade of autonomy in order to perform the tasks and achieve a successful result. According to the European Qualification System (EQF) system, we use the following definitions:

KNOWLEDGE: means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

SKILLS: means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

COMPETENCE: means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

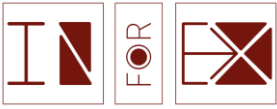
Using these three definitions a job description is composed by you (employer) and partner organisation for the trainee. Job description is his / her learning on the job plan.

A filled Job description which might be used as a reference by the partner organization and employer is provided in the **Training and Certification Methodology Handbook** which was presented to you during the training sessions for employers.

Please have in mind that **Training and Certification Methodology Handbook** is the primary source for consultation when questions arise.

VII. What do we have to do next?

a) *Selection of final beneficiaries based on skills assessment and job description*



In each country, trainers (entrepreneurs) will have to work with 2 ex-offenders (if circumstances are favourable, the employer may train more final beneficiaries). We are aiming at 24 ex-offenders in total in each country. Working with the trainers, the ex-offenders have been selected according to a needs-based selection criteria and their locality to the place of work. The ex-offenders are assessed using a needs assessment for eligibility on the training programme, taking into account two groups:

a) participants who served a prison sentence;

b) participants who served a community sentence.

The trainee eligibility form expressing their will to take part in the on the job training should be completed by the ex-offender with support from their prison or probation service or partner organisation if necessary. The selection will be conducted by the partner organisation together with the employer. This needs based criteria is adapted to different contexts in conjunction with the partner organisation and employer.

For the assessment of initial skills possessed and to find a suitable employer, KUDOS platform has been used (provided by partners from UK – CASCAID).

Pay specific attention to this point: This programme is not suitable for ex-offenders who possess no work related skills or the desire to work at all, nor is it aimed at those who have a large amount of previous work experience and a higher level of qualification. The aim is to reach low-skilled adults to support them with on the job training. Low skilled can be defined according to LEVEL 1 or below of the EQF competencies framework.

b) Initial training of final beneficiaries by partner organisations

Many ex-offenders lack basic skills to effectively manage their own career, gain and sustain employment. Therefore, work and employability skills training will be provided to trainees prior to them entering the work based learning, as this will provide a basic understanding of work skills and prepare them for the environment. The exact topics may vary depending on the context and country, but a suggestion of areas to cover include:

- Understanding why we work and earn a living
- How to dress for work or an interview
- Time management (showing up on time, consistently)
- Planning transport to work
- Positive interactions with co-workers



- Conflict management
- Setting up a bank account
- Computer skills



The training duration is about 18 hours divided in three days (To introduce programme, Life Skills Session, Employability Skills Session). This training is delivered by partner organizations. Therefore, employers (entrepreneurs) already get a person who has already done some initial training and has been introduced with skills in order to make the transition into on-the job training easier.

c) Job description

Overall trainees need to develop soft skills as well as technical skills throughout the training programme. The exact skills obtained will depend on the industry they are working in, however a broad job description outline (for adaptation) has been provided in the training methodology which might be found on the project website (<http://inforexproject.eu/en/english-outputs/english-definition-of-training-and-certification-model/>). As already mentioned, the creation of the job description in conjunction with the employer is the start of the training programme and forms the basis of the training programme. The job description has to be prepared before the final beneficiary enters the on the job training. The job description should have been prepared during the training for employers (if more time is necessary, partners together with the employer or his/ her appointed person should keep on working on the job description after the training). The job description will help to keep track of the skills that the beneficiary is learning and is also a guide for the ex-offender to support assessment of his/ her skills at the end of the training path. You should have in mind that if you have any questions related to the training methodology, you may always consult project partners:

(each partner here inserts their contacts when making translation).

d) Training (320 hours)

This stage involves the beneficiaries completing 320 hours of work based training on the employer's premises, approximately 10 days per month, over 5 months. However, the training is flexible and adaptable to the personal circumstances of both the employer and the trainee. They may draw up a schedule suitable for both parties.

An outline structure for this is given below, however this will be adapted depending on the employer and beneficiaries needs:

- Meeting between **employer, tutor** from **partner organisation** and **final beneficiary**
- **Introduction to the training structure**
- Commence **training** on the agreed job description
- **Weekly and monthly progress meetings**
- Completion of the **workbook** by ex-offender
- Final assessment of skills and **certification** by employer

The review process consists of

a weekly progress meeting between the trainee and the employer,

Weekly Progress Form

(Page 49 of the Training and Certification Methodology Handbook)

(http://inforexproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/IO4_Training-Methodology_English.pdf)

a monthly review meeting between the trainee and employer and

Monthly Review Meeting Form

(Page 51 of the Training and Certification Methodology Handbook)

(http://inforexproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/IO4_Training-Methodology_English.pdf)

a monthly progress report from the employer to the partner organization in each country.

Employer Monthly Progress Report to Partners Form

(Page 48 of the Training and Certification Methodology Handbook)

(http://inforexproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/IO4_Training-Methodology_English.pdf)

Throughout the whole process, the trainee keeps a record of attendance and completes a workbook as evidence of certification and to support the progress review meetings. The workbook is presented to the trainee by the partner organisation at the beginning of his/her training path.

e) The final assessment of skills

Assessment should be a mixture of self-assessment (performed by the final beneficiary) and trainer (entrepreneur) reports. The skills, knowledge and competences obtained should be coherent to the EQF Level 3. At the beginning of training path, trainees are given a workbook to document their experiences, in order to reflect and articulate what they have learnt.



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The workbook includes job description, attendance sheet, weekly reports and general description of tasks performed as viewed from final beneficiaries perspective.

Trainers (employers) fill in a weekly and monthly report forms to assess how the trainees have achieved the required knowledge, skills and competences based on the job description for the role. At the end of the training these forms should be reviewed to define the final list of competences for which the person may be awarded the certificate. Partner organisation also participates in the process of assessment based on the results of initial training and monthly reports provided by the employer. Employer together with partner organisation/ training provider issue the certificate.

VIII. Findings of pilot training course

a) Evaluation by entrepreneurs and impact of pilot training courses

The entrepreneurs' assessment of the effects of training for former offenders is a key element in the successful outcome of the project. At this stage, it is important for entrepreneurs to focus their attention on the process as well as on the results of training.

An effective training model should work in the field. In the context of business experience, it is possible to assess the progress of former offenders and the development of their skills, knowledge and competences.

We ask entrepreneurs to carefully assess the strengths and weaknesses of training. For example:

What did it do in the training process?

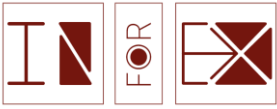
What can be improved, though?

What difficulties have we experienced in the dialogue with the former offenders?

Has the tutor's presence simplified the inclusion of former offenders in the company?

This ex post evaluation is a crucial feedback. That's why project partners ask YOU for the most support and help. Partners ask all entrepreneurs to pay attention to all phases of the project and to fill out the documents which will help to improve the training methodology.

The partner organizations will provide a constant help to support the training process and they will keep close to entrepreneurs.



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After the pilot training courses with final beneficiaries we kindly ask you to fill in the evaluation questionnaire provided below. Your feedback will help to improve our training and certification methodology.



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ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

To be completed by employers after the training with final beneficiaries

The following questionnaire aims at collecting information and feedback after the training you have performed with final beneficiaries. The goal is to ameliorate and finalise the training you have received as well as the training methodology prepared within the INforEX project.

Thus, we invite you to sign, on a value scale from 1 to 6 (the extreme values are indicated in each item) your opinion and point of view regarding each item. Mark with a circle the number which reflects mainly your opinion. Since your judgment matters, please express as well by writing your personal suggestions, notes and comments.

We thank you in advance for your time.

1. ASSESS THE QUALITY OF THE TRAINING WHICH PREPARED YOU TO THE TASKS AS TRAINER (NOW THAT THE TRAINING WITH FINAL BENEFICIARIES FINISHED)

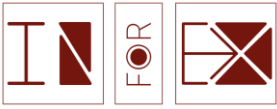
a. Which training contents was not so relevant to your preparation? *(express in writing)*

b. Which training contents would you add so as to improve your preparation? *(express in writing)*

c. The INforEX training methodology used to prepare yourself to become a trainer was:

not appropriate 1 2 3 4 5 6 appropriate

d. In which way the training methodology could be improved so as to be more appropriate? *(express in writing)*



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2. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT TRAINING FOR TRAINEES AS YOU EXPERIENCED IT

a. During the training activity you have performed for your trainees, did you use the training handbook and / or guidelines?

never 1 2 3 4 5 6 always

If so, for what reason:

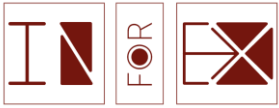
How did you use it?

b. On which level do you think you have been effective as a trainer:

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 very much

c. Which of the training needs expressed by your trainee did you find difficult to address? (express in writing)

Why?



d. How would you assess the support given to you by the tutors from partner organisations?

not helpful 1 2 3 4 5 6 very helpful

For what reason?

e. Which of the following adjectives best describe your experience as trainer? (*sign more than one*).

1. pleasurable
2. boring
3. committing
4. fun
5. resourceful
6. undertaking
7. demanding
8. consuming
9. tiring
10. useful
11. useless
12. motivating
13. stressful
14. rewarding
15. other _____



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f. How strongly would you recommend to one of your entrepreneur colleagues or friends to join this project initiative?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 very much

Final comments/notes: _____

Thank you so much for your cooperation!