



8. PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORTING LABOUR MOBILITY

What does the EU want to achieve?

The EU wants to achieve a rate of **75 % of employment for women and men aged 20-64**. A special focus is put on groups that at present are most severely touched by unemployment: young people, older workers, low-skilled workers and legal migrants.

How?

Primarily by supporting **job creation**, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. The CSF acknowledges that rural areas have generally a lower employment rate than the average, and recommends the EARDF (but hopefully not only) to focus on job creation in rural areas.

Member States are also encouraged to **modernise their employment services**. These should be able to provide efficient assistance for workforce transition, in particular towards emerging sectors in the renewable energies, as well as care and health sectors. The **creation of networks with employers and education institutes** has been recognised as an efficient tool for matching the gap between the supply of, and the demand for, jobs. A **better integration of young people in education schemes and/or the labour market** should also be achieved through **collaboration between education institutes and businesses** and should be approached through apprenticeship-type vocational training, more widespread internships as a first step to work, and better support for entrepreneurship by school-leavers.

How can mountains contribute?

Mountain areas have a **lower average percentage of working age people** than other areas. However, these low unemployment rates are often the result of exodus to other areas: only those who had a job stayed. The available jobs are also often **seasonal** or **low qualified jobs**. As these jobs are unattractive to young people on a long-term basis, they tend to leave. Mountains are also facing the selective departure of women.

However, some **mountain territories have developed strategies** to attract working age people to their areas and to involve them in the local economy. Platforms that map job offers and competences available, better networking between education centres and employers, integrated strategies for restructuring jobs, and the integration of migrants have already been experimented with in mountain areas, with positive results. People surveyed during the PADIMA project replied that they would like to live and work in mountain areas. Many enterprises and businesses could flourish if barriers were removed. Investing in these areas is likely to create employment.

What do they need in order to contribute?

The challenge in mountain areas is two-fold: helping those who need employees to find the right ones, and helping the unemployed to find jobs matching their expectations.

Both require the creation of conditions for economies to function successfully and for people to be able to live the modern way of life they seek. This requires improvement of accessibility by transport and access to latest generation high-speed broadband, housing and services of general interest.

A further need is the **provision of training and education** opportunities (cf priority 10) corresponding to regional, specific needs; such opportunities may have to be created. Skills are essential in order to reach a 75% rate of employment; but this is also required for the **creation of new businesses**. In



agriculture and forestry, training can improve the strategic design of professional projects carried out by unemployed people.

Finally, authorities must seek to build economic development with local people or with people who will move in and **stay for a long time, to occupy a stable working position**. Official support must be provided to **encourage governmental departments and company branches to relocate some of their activities**, even small branches in remote territories away from the metropolitan areas.

Example of actions/practices/policies/projects which could deliver on that objective

The Interreg IVC project PADIMA has looked at good practices in the field of economic diversification and territorial marketing which can help create employment in mountain areas and better market employment opportunities to suitable potential workers. Below are a few examples of successful practices.

- **Create platforms of collaboration between business and education centres** with the aim of closing the mismatch between education and economy and ease employment:
 - The **DalaWux** initiative, in Dalarna, Sweden, conducted competence analyses of 1,000 workplaces and 5,000 unemployed individuals. The results were used to adapt existing courses and to increase the employability of local people. The skills that meet the needs of industry and society have been taught during in-school training and on-site internships.
- **Create direct relationships between enterprises and schools to ease local recruitment of staff and help young people to find jobs:**
 - The wood sector in Norway had more and more difficulties in attracting young people, and the young people wanting to stay in their home regions did not manage to find jobs. Thus, in Buskerud, 43 manufacturers of furniture, interiors and wood products took the [initiative](#) to meet students from secondary schools and present job opportunities. Wood industry representatives presented their professions and encouraged young pupils to design small pieces of furniture. After the meeting, students sent 30 applications for new jobs to companies. Companies selected the best students and employed them.
- Support the **creation of a wide variety of new activities, not sectorally focused:**
 - The Province of Teruel, Spain, launched the 'mineral plan', supporting business development in alternative sectors after the mines had closed. The Association for the Promotion and Business Development of Teruel Ltd. (SUMA) was created with the aim of supporting investments and cash flow for (new) companies and business involvement in the region (more info in PADIMA [good practice guide on economic diversification](#) p. 110)
- **Map better the competences existing locally and help partners of migrant workers to find a long-term job.** A new worker will only stay for the long term if both partners of a couple moving into the mountains have satisfying professional opportunities. Integration of partners can be achieved through specific training solutions and support to the creation of businesses for partners of workers (newly) settled in mountain/rural areas or through initiatives aiming at easing recruitment.
 - In the Dalarna region, Sweden, the Teknikdalen Foundation and some businesses have created a public-private association 'The Recruitment Consultancy' which aims to facilitate the recruitment of husbands/wives of people already working in this mountain area. Every company from the region is encouraged to provide the Recruitment Consultancy with information about the partners of their employees who are looking for a job. After a personal meeting, the Recruitment Consultancy helps the candidate to target the right companies in

the area and forwards the application to them with a recommendation (More info in PADIMA guide on [Territorial marketing](#), p. 43).

- **Help people who move in the area to find housing** in the area:
 - In Buskerud County (Norway), an initiative called “[Light in windows](#)” has enabled to improve the occupation rate of rural buildings and houses to the benefit of new migrants.
- **Increase employability of legal migrants (from abroad):** some specific actions are needed for foreigners in terms of language training, competence equivalence and cultural integration:
 - [Teruel](#) Province (Spain) and Dalarna region (Sweden) have developed **specific training courses** for immigrants who arrived recently in the country and need language classes or specific competencies to find a job easily (good practices 6 and 20 on education).
 - In terms of **cultural integration** and help with competence equivalence, several newcomers in the [study areas of the project](#) have stressed the role of “immigrant hosts” working within municipalities in mountain areas to help newcomers to settle down (through assistance in administrative tasks, but also facilitating contacts with inhabitants of same profile, etc. good practice 22, on territorial marketing).
- **Encourage youth entrepreneurship:**
 - Local development agency PINS in Croatia implemented the “**YES**” project (see info in [EN](#) or [HR](#)) through which they educated 50 young people to become entrepreneurs. After a short period, 10 of them started to work as tourist guides, and another 10 - mostly young women - started with different entrepreneurial activities and are still active.
 - [Ungt entreprenørskap](#) (UE) is a national Norwegian non-profit organization that works with entrepreneurship in schools and to stimulate collaboration between schools and businesses. UE has organisations in most counties of Norway. One of the activities organised in this framework in mountain region is the “[SUM](#)” or “Creative youth fair”: the mountain Regions of [Hedmark/Sør-Trøndelag](#) organise, in collaboration with EU and Fjellregion, a yearly large event where young people show their work in enterprises, and where ordinary businesses come to meet the young people.
- **Facilitate business creation in remote areas:**
 - The idea of a ‘[Regional agency for mountain settlements](#)’ has been piloted in the area of Canavese, Piemonte Region (Italy), with the support of EAFRD LEADER funds. The agency aims at implementing social and economic development by sustaining the creation of new enterprises, attracting resources towards marginal areas and increasing the number of enterprises that operate in mountain context. 11 businesses have been created as a result.

More information:

PADIMA – Education and training - [Final report](#) - [Good practice guide](#) - [Newsletter](#)

PADIMA – Economic diversification– [Final report](#) – [Good practice guide](#) – [Newsletter](#)

PADIMA – Territorial marketing – [Final report](#)– [Good practice guide](#) – [Newsletter](#)

European mountain Convention 2012, Chambéry, France ‘**Youth to the top: the mountain path to the future**’ : [Declaration](#) – [Conference page](#) and [presentations](#)

