

EAPN Lithuania

Our chosen topic is:

Access to decent jobs and equal employment opportunities for different categories

Why have you chosen this priority?

Work is one of the most effective ways for people to escape poverty, but there are many different barriers that prevent different categories from having a decent job.

During the meeting we talked about unemployment and related problems. Participants reported unemployment is in itself a problem. Inactive people face not only financial problems but also psychological barriers in the long run. Undermined self-esteem, self-confidence, frustration and the fear of returning to work is growing deeper without work. People are angry, frustrated when they are not working.

Why is this priority important for your country OR region OR community OR group?

Based on our own experiences, during meeting we clarified few barriers that denies access to decent jobs and equal employment opportunities for different categories.

- Age
Older people before retirement say that they find it very difficult to find a job. Many are faced with a situation where their candidacy is not even considered due to age. During the meeting, people said they felt despair and humiliation. On the other hand, some older people are struggling with work because of poor health. Nonetheless, it strives to remain able and demanding.
- Public transportation.
The number of jobs in rural areas is very limited but there are people who want to work. No matter how strange in the 21st century is, the main problem they face is the lack of public transport. Not all people can afford car (especially people experiencing poverty), and if your work place is 10 or 20 kilometres away you simply cannot reach it.
- Disability
Being in the labour market is a major challenge for many people with disabilities. Limited access to employment and training are two of the biggest problems that the disabled face. The likelihood that they will be unemployed and will be forced to survive on a lower income is much higher than for people without disabilities. During the meeting, participants mentioned that it is very difficult for people with disabilities to find a job. Although they are capable and willing to work, they often face a negative response. One reason for this is the poorly adapted environment.
- Bureaucracy
Pep's noted that there is no real help from the employment service. There is still a great deal of bureaucracy, with the real needs of the unemployed being lost.

There are much more barriers that denies access to decent jobs and equal employment, but those are from our Pep's direct experience.

Are there any policies in place to address the problem? How do they work? What is the impact of these policies on PePs lives?

Currently there are many policies to address this topic. However, while social exclusion is increasing and poverty is significant, these strategies are defective or do not work at all. While government seeks to make education, health, social security and other systems more effective, many people in poverty remain frustrated, as these policies often leave them to their fate, often leading to deeper poverty.

What solutions or improvements to existing solutions do PePs propose regarding the problem?

To ensure good access to decent jobs and equal employment opportunities for different categories we need:

- To change public attitudes towards the unemployed (generally, the public's attitude towards the long-term unemployed is negative. This leads to greater self-distrust, exclusion, dysfunctional motivation and ultimately depression)
- To change the way the Lithuanian employment service works. Bearing in mind that each person's situation is different and requires individual assessment. The unemployed themselves point out that services should be personalised according to the individual's abilities. The current programmes are being implemented in a very formal manner. The career guidance opportunities being offered frequently do not reflect people's capabilities and preferences. Such programmes often have no real practical benefit. The employment services now available do not help excluded people find employment.
- There is a need for more learning and retraining opportunities for older people and for anyone with non-demanding specialties.
- Enabling and mandating local authorities to quickly remove obstacles to people's access to decent work. Such as the absence of public transport or the shortening of the time needed to produce the required documents.
- Financial social assistance should ensure basic needs. "If basic needs are not met, it's difficult to learn. Until your basic needs are met, you definitely won't satisfy others either."
- There is a need for an effective funding system to adapt workplaces to people with disabilities.

This is few pictures of our meeting



