



Supported Employment in the Nordic countries - policy recommendations

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“SE-Norden” (2008 – 2011)

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- Employers & clients are very satisfied with the Supported Employment service
- Weak knowledge on Supported Employment on policy levels
- Nordic national EUSE organisations lack political influence and are not actively promoting quality-based Supported Employment
- Need to develop from ‘practices that resemble Supported Employment’ to ‘**quality-based Supported Employment**’. Other practices may be of high importance, but should not be labeled ‘Supported Employment’



Supported Employment in the Nordic countries

Experiences of Nordic stakeholders

- Clients and employers are very satisfied with the service of Supported Employment: **Proactive follow-up of a Job Coach**
- Nordic caseworkers have experienced several 'good practices'; yet they have **little faith that an ordinary workplace can be used for those with severely reduced workability or multiple support needs.**
- Job Coaches are often employed in **organisations where Supported Employment plays a minor financial role. Time, competence and funding to do follow-up at the workplace is a challenge**



Supported Employment in the Nordic countries

- All countries have services that **resembles Supported Employment**. Varying but promising results, not a very great expansion since the 1990s, **not yet a mainstream service in all countries**
 - Struggle to find a place in a field dominated by sheltered employment, 'train – place' & 'flow-through' models and wage subsidies
- **Supported Employment is defined and implemented in a number of different ways** depending on
 - the knowledge and financing of relevant governmental funders
 - the incentives, interests and competences of service providers



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Policy Framework

- Policy regulations:
 - **Allow that all steps of the SE-process can be completed**, from initial contact and planning and to finding or developing a suitable job, and to provide follow-up in the job
- In practice:
 - **The SE-process is often split up between different responsibilities**
 - Different bureaucratic procedures and formalities create problems for both disabled job seekers, Job Coaches and employers
 - Lack of incentives for Service Providers



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Policy recommendations

- Develop and reinforce Supported Employment in accordance with international quality standards
- Ensure continuity of the SE-process, also after a job contract – increased attention to job retention
- Develop Supported Employment as a **mainstream service** for all job seekers with needs and motivation, regardless of workability or disability
 - Remove access criteria associated with diagnosis, workability and pension benefits - **focus on needs & motivation**



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Policy recommendations (continued)

- Create incentives to ensure further development and strengthening efforts in Supported Employment services
 - It should not be financially rewarding for Service Providers to do clarification and training of clients in a sheltered environment than in ordinary workplaces
- Governmental organisations need knowledge on Supported Employment to buy and monitor high quality performance
- Job Coach education specifically aimed at quality standards and knowledge-based Supported Employment must be available
- Short and long term results must be documented
 - Overviews of how many clients get / are in jobs