



The Policy makers' and Financers' Perspective

**A comparative overview of
the 5th phase of the project
'QuIP: Quality in Practice'**

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This paper is the summary of the fifth research phase of the LEONARDO-project “Quality in practice”. The project explores quality perspectives of Supported Employment for people with disabilities.

Aims are:

- defining relevant quality criteria in SE from the point of view of the different stakeholders (project managers, job facilitators, users, companies, public authorities etc.),
- defining criteria for success of SE-projects other than pure quantitative measures,
- developing instruments for the ongoing evaluation of SE projects,
- facilitating SE projects to present and justify their work.

In each participating country (Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Norway, Spain and UK) one supported employment project is the focus of research carried out by a national research partner. A mix of methods has been tailored to fit the needs of the involved stakeholders. Group discussions, interviews as well as informal conversations have been used to elicit the views of the people with disabilities, staff of SE-projects, employers as well as public authorities. A large conference with stakeholders from different countries took place in October, 2002 in Budapest with the aim to bring stakeholders views together and discuss the projects results.

The following paper summarises the results of the national research in the participating countries on the perspective of the employers and has been written by the English research partner.

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1. The method

All 6 countries participating in the project took part in the survey, too. Altogether, 31 interviews were carried out with representatives of 23 organisations. These 23 organisations represented 11 legislative and 12 financing bodies on national, regional and local level. The detailed list of the organisations interviewed is shown below in Table 1.

Table 1

Country	Policy-maker	Financer
Austria	Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations (national level) Provincial Government of Styria (regional level)	Federal Office of Social Affairs/Styria (regional and local level) Labour Market Service Styria (regional and local level)
Czech Republic	Section for Employment Policy of Persons with Changed Working Capacity – part of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (national level) Labour Office District Písek (regional level) Labour Office District Ceske Budejovice (regional level)	Social Service Department (national level)
United Kingdom	Essex County Council Social Service Department (regional level)	Essex County Council Social Service Department (regional level) Department of Work and Pension's Employment Service (regional level) Essex County Council enterprise Division, Essex County Council Social Service Department (regional level)
Norway	Directorate of Labour (national level)	Regional/Country Labour Market Service (regional level) Local Labour Market Service (local level)
Hungary	Department of Rehabilitation and Learning Disabilities at the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs (national level) Employment Institute (national level)	National Employment Fund /OFA/ (national level) Metropolitan Labour Centre /FMK/ (regional level)
Spain	Ministry of Labour and Social Service (national level) National Institute for Community Integration in Salamanca (national level) Department of Labour of regional government (Andalucia) Department of Labour of regional government (Catalunya)	Department of Labour of regional government (Andalucia) ¹ Department of Labour of regional government (Catalunya) ¹

¹ These organisations are involved in the policy-making process as well as in funding.



The interviews lasted for 30-60 minutes on average. In some of the countries the list of the questions to be asked at the interview was sent out in advance so that interviewees were able to prepare. This seemed to work well in these cases and can be recommended for similar interviews.

During the interviews the question of whether interviewees should speak on behalf of their organisation (CZ) or should express their own opinion (H) was raised. Consequently, when conducting further surveys it is important to distinguish between the official view of the agency and the personal view of the interview partner. There should be enough space for the interview partner to voice his/her personal opinion. At the same time, when evaluating the interviews it is important to consider the official view, the one that is accepted by the organisation in question. For this reason, when conducting the interviews as well as when analysing them, it is vital that these two areas be kept apart.

The Norwegian partners decided to opt for a group interview. The advantage of such a method is that it ensures the meeting of different partners, who at the same time can familiarise themselves directly with the opinion of other financing bodies and legislators. Additionally, if well prepared, at a group discussion participants will be motivated to share their opinions.

On the other hand, finding a time that is suitable for all those concerned can be difficult, and conducting a group interview requires expertise. However, provided that it is prepared professionally, it can be a very successful way of carrying out an investigation and can be recommended instead of individual interviews.

Finally, several countries found that partners having a closer contact with the organisation providing the SE service put forward concrete, practical suggestions and also formed a definite opinion about the service and the organisation providing it. At the same time, those partners who were in more distant contact with the organisation made recommendations that were more general and less practical.

These findings have to be taken into account by an SE agency carrying out a self-evaluation. They need to be considered when deciding what type of information the organisation requires and what the aim of the evaluation is – to assess the financier or the legislator.

Alternatively, it may be that different partners will need different types of questions, which can ensure that the investigation will be more exact.



2. Co-operation between the SE agency and policy-makers / funding agency

The questions relating to co-operation were put only to the representatives of the organisations who were in direct contact with the SE provider. The majority of these were representatives of financing bodies. At the same time, a great number of legislators stressed the importance of their existing good contact with the SE provider.

In all the countries participating in the project all those questioned judged their relationship with the SE service provider to be good, or in some cases very good. This was further supported by the fact that the majority of the interview partners have been in long-term contact lasting for 5-10 years with the SE service provider.

Various views were listed as reasons for a good contact with partners, for example, accurate data documentation and communicating this to the funding agency (H) and pleasant atmosphere (A) were mentioned. Some elements were present in all countries. The most important of these that were present in the reports about four countries (A, S, N, H) were co-operative problem-solving and participation in co-operative development. Moreover, active and continuous contact establishment came up in two countries (CZ, H), similarly to accurate data documentation and communicating this to the funding agency (N, H).

In relation to possibilities for improving co-operation, different suggestions were made. National features also became apparent as was the case in earlier stages of the QuIP project. For example, in Austria the most important obstacle to co-operation seemed to be the high turnover rates for job coaches.

It is interesting that in the Czech data it appears that co-operation would benefit if financiers were able to spend more time with the SE service or with co-operating with the SE service provider. The Hungarian results already draw attention to the lack of a national framework, since the financier identified the improvement of co-operation between NGOs and the government as a possibility of improving its relationship with the service provider. Linked to this is the finding of the British summary that identifies the development of a framework for providing SE service as the necessary element of improvement. While in Hungary the most important expectation is the establishment of the framework, in Britain suggestions were made for its development.

This remark supports a claim that has already come up several times during the project. According to it, candidate countries just as well as some EU countries are significantly behind countries like the UK, Norway or Austria in the development of a national framework for providing SE service. More information about this topic is provided by the fact that in the field of SE only the UK, Norway and Austria have national (Norway, Austria) or regional (UK) policy guidelines.



3. The aim of SE

All those questioned considered the aim of SE service generally known. In listing the aims and classifying them the harmony with the aims of the organisation in question (financing and legislative aims) was highlighted. The responses of the different countries are summarised in Table 2.

In the majority of countries, employment in the ordinary labour market was listed as the first aim of providing SE service. In several countries this was supplemented by the explanation that it is an important aim because it contributes to the social integration of people with disabilities

Table 2

Country	Aim of SE
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New jobs in the first labour market ▪ Maintaining employment contracts which are in danger of being terminated ▪ Sub-targets ▪ Intensive, tailor-made work with the client: motivating the job seeker, know-how about the regional labour market situation etc. ▪ Functioning network of related services, for example: Clearing at schools, work assistance, job coaching etc. ▪ Social inclusion through integration into the first labour market
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ promoting social integration ▪ fighting against discrimination ▪ fighting against exclusion ▪ promoting employment/decreasing unemployment
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to find a permanent* job for as many people with disabilities (pwd) as possible in the first labour market ▪ to promote social integration
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the most important aims are to help job seekers in a proper way to get and keep ordinary jobs with a salary ▪ result is often that job seekers get a part-time job, combining salary and disability insurance
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SE promotes social integration of people with disabilities (pwd)
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ promoting social integration ▪ fighting against discrimination ▪ helping to decrease unemployment

The importance of finding long-term employment was emphasised in almost all of the countries. However, “long-term” had different meanings in different contexts. For example, one of the Hungarian interview partners considered a six-month long placement to be an acceptable and long-term result. In his opinion, a person with disabilities can gain valuable experience in even such a short period of time. This experience in turn will help him/her to find longer-term employment step by step.



In two countries (A, N) retaining the job surfaced as an aim. This is a very interesting issue because, for instance, within the Hungarian system the SE service mainly supports the placement of unemployed people. In relation to this, in two countries (CZ, H) reducing unemployment was explicitly listed as an aim of the SE service.

Thus, in each country the target group of the service is considered to be different, depending on whether people with disabilities who already have a job but need help in retaining it are targeted.

A further interesting conclusion can be found in the Norwegian summary. It emphasises the dependence of the nature² (working time and salary) of the job on the person with disabilities. This means that the person's salary and working time are very important, but the type of work, such as the position of the person should also be considered. They regard part-time job placement and multiple financing of salaries acceptable, too. By the latter we mean that part of the supported employee's salary comes from social benefits.

The conclusion about part-time placement is supported by the practical experience of another country (H), too. There, the majority of clients questioned during the project worked in part-time employment.

Social integration was identified as the second most important aim in 5 countries (A, CZ, S, UK, H). At the same time, it is obvious that not all respondents put social integration in the first place. In relation to the issue of social integration it is interesting to mention that in two countries (CZ, H) the questions of fighting discrimination and exclusion, and ensuring equal opportunities were raised as aims of SE. Both these countries are EU candidate countries and have recently transferred their political systems from socialism to capitalism. It may be proof of the fact that in these and similar countries ensuring equal opportunities for people with disabilities has not yet been achieved. At the same time, such a finding supports the conclusion arrived at earlier, according to which in these countries the social side of the service is of great importance.

In contrast, in Norway and the UK the financiers unambiguously established that the SE service is first and foremost a labour market service.

In the Austrian report the main aims of SE were divided into sub-aims. This shows that it is useful to specify sub-aims in order to evaluate the success of an SE service.

The Norwegian report was a good example for this, where the characteristics of the work were broken down into sub-categories.

A further example is provided by the British summary. It contains a statement that lists the development of the improvement of the responsibility of the person with learning disabilities as an important element of social integration.

Sub-categories for the important aims of SE were formed in each phase of the project. The results are summarised in the "Quality Criteria" developed in the course of the QuIP-project³.

The elements collected by the financiers and legislators fit into this system of aims and are similar to the aims articulated by other stakeholders in the SE service.

In relation to the aims there was a question about when the SE service is considered to be successful. All those questioned identified successful job placement as the most significant criterion of success. It is believed that the SE service can facilitate social integration in various ways, but integration through employment is its main objective.

Czech respondents clearly distinguished between entering employment as a success criterion and offering additional services provided for clients. It was considered to be a success if clients received the

² Here, by the nature of the job only the working time and the corresponding salary are meant. It does not, however, refer to the type of work, i.e. whether someone is a cleaner, a porter or a kitchen hand.

³ Quality criteria for providing SE were collected as a result of the QUIP project, based on interviews with different stakeholders.



help they needed. This indicates that while in the majority of the countries the financiers and legislators consider the SE service a labour market service, for the Czech policy-makers/funding agencies the social part of the service is equally important.

Also, an additional success criterion was mentioned in the UK, i.e. that the client becomes increasingly independent as a result of using the SE service. Here, there is a direct link between the articulated aims and the judgement of success.

The responses collected in all the other countries suggest that although the aims of the SE service cover a wide range of areas, they are not in accordance with the official system of success criteria. As a result, the assessment of the success of the service by the funding agency is carried out in a relatively confined area. This might cause problems when attempting to assess the link between success and financing. The success criteria identified by the respondents are summarised in Table 3 below.



Table 3

Country	SE success criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Austria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ complying with the contracts between the SE initiative and the Federal Offices for Social Affairs ▪ other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ continuous reduction of support ▪ job meeting the needs of the job seeker ▪ clients identifying with a certain job, qualification (especially for young people) ▪ satisfaction of the job seeker ▪ motivated SE team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Czech Republic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ job is found, client becomes independent and secures the place in the future (what does this mean?) ▪ not necessarily a job - “Success is that a team of professionals solves individual needs of the client and that the client can find such help”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hungary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ sustained employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Norway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ getting people into ordinary jobs ▪ job seekers get as common working conditions as possible ▪ the job coaches have faith in succeeding with the work they do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ United Kingdom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ getting employment, personal responsibility ▪ sustained employment ▪ person’s own response

4. The process of SE

When examining the elements of the SE service, financiers and legislators were firstly asked about their knowledge of these elements.

On the one hand, financiers know the steps of the SE process very well since without such knowledge it would be impossible to determine whether the service was worthy of financing. On the other hand, a much more varied picture is found when assessing the knowledge of the SE process of the legislators: in some countries (e.g. in Hungary) they have detailed knowledge of the whole process, in others, depending on the legislator, the level of familiarity with this process differs greatly.

Consequently, it is questionable how legislators can provide a suitable background for this kind of service without detailed knowledge of the process. Moreover, it would be important to know how legislation and the practice of SE services can be harmonized. Such a question poses smaller problems in countries possessing a national framework for SE service provision because in their case the agreement between the framework and the service is at least partly achieved. However, during the QuIP



project it became obvious that countries not yet possessing a national framework face more serious problems. In their case it is the role of legislators to create some kind of an agreement. However, without thorough understanding of the system of SE, this might cause difficulties.

In Hungary the Salva Vita Foundation tries to assert influence on the legislators by personally informing them (i.e. lobbying). The Foundation also intends to initiate common development projects, with policy makers in the future.

The other important conclusion of investigating this area was that respondents do not necessarily see the success of the SE service in any of its particular steps, but in the characteristics of the whole process. The responses given to the different success factors of the process are summarised in Table 4 below. Among these factors we can find the tailor-made nature of the service, which was mentioned in four studies (CZ, N, S, H).

The other important feature is the involvement of the family and environment of clients, which was also listed in four countries (CZ, S, A, H).

In this respect, there appears to be a significant difference between the countries involved in the QuIP project. In some participating countries interview partners consider the involvement of parents an important priority, and they are indeed very active in mobilising them. They consider it an inseparable component of the process (CZ, H, S, A). At the same time, in the practice of other countries the contact with the family is only part of the SE service in certain justified situations (N, UK).

The third most important feature is appropriate contact with clients and other stakeholders (A, H). For instance, in Austria it are not only the contacts with employers, clients and the family that are mentioned, but also those with other organisations.

The following element was considered important in one country each: good atmosphere within the organisation (A), continuous contact within the organisation providing the service (N, H) and trust between client and job coach.

Apart from the general characteristics of the SE service, financiers also defined the elements that they consider to be of high priority in view of the success of the service. In Norway, Austria and Hungary respondents think it important to conduct an assessment as to the needs and abilities of clients. Moreover, Norwegian respondents stressed the significance of locating new employers and the follow-up of the process. At the same time, Hungarian respondents thought that a trial work period is important because it provides a chance for a better evaluation of clients (i.e. what they like, what they know and what they are capable of doing). This also helps to prepare clients for real jobs.

In summary, it can be observed that apart from assessing the client there was no other element in the SE process that both financiers and legislators thought to stress in view of the success of the service.



Table 4

Country	Important steps/tasks in the SE process
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ co-operation with the job seeker (“security”) ▪ co-operation with the companies and the colleagues ▪ functioning co-operation between different relevant organisations ▪ figures of “cases” and employment arrangements agreed upon in the contracts should be met ▪ support with organisational matters ▪ co-operation with other relevant protagonists (e.g. teachers, parents) ▪ handling of persons’ data between different organisations ▪ clearing job seekers’ professional perspectives ▪ functioning assignments ▪ social support outside the employment environment
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ most important is the client-oriented character of SE ▪ real co-operation with client and family ▪ an atmosphere of trust and openness, possibility of choice are important for good service
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ selecting and convincing the employer ▪ preparing employment ▪ trial work → suitable person for the job ▪ preparing the client and the working environment ▪ continuous personal help for the clients – time limit problem
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ that the job seeker gets the opportunity to say what is important for him/her ▪ get to know the job seeker by meeting him/her in their private sphere (get to know the job seeker as the person he/she is) ▪ important to work with the employers and find suitable work places according to the different abilities and needs of the job seekers ▪ the geographic dimension: Sometimes, there are many possible employers (e.g. in cities) and you might not have to work so hard to find a suitable job. In other places, with fewer employers, it might be necessary to work harder to find jobs.
Spain	-
United Kingdom	-



5. The characteristics of a job coach

Respondents defined a wide range of characteristics job coaches should possess. The answers were summarised and grouped by country and are shown in Table 5 below.

The responses can be divided into two larger groups, into the so-called soft skills of job coaches and the professional attributes.

The former is built up of a variety of characteristics, whereby the detailed description varies from respondent to respondent. The characteristics listed here are, e.g. commitment, tolerance and patience. Traits that were mentioned in all countries were empathy or responsiveness and good communication skills.

In relation to personal characteristics, the Czech report states that financiers consider soft skills more important than professional knowledge when assessing the preparedness of candidates.

The second group of professional characteristics also shows a varied picture. Several country reports state the importance of knowing the demands of the labour market (H, S, A) or being aware of educational and training practices.

The Austrian report mentioned the professional experience of job coaches as an important consideration influencing their suitability for the job. This is all the more important because for the SE service provider in Austria participating in the study – but also for SE in Austria in general – the turnover of job coaches is a high-priority problem. Among others, this could also be linked with the fact that job coaches lack professional training and experience.

Finally, it is important to point out one of the conclusions of the Norwegian report. There, the financier calls attention to the fact that within the service provider it is not so important that each and every job coach possesses all the necessary qualifications and characteristics for the job. However, the job coach teams within the organisation as a whole should have a good mixture of the required qualifications.



Table 5

Country	Job coach skills and characteristics
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Soft skills ▪ Economic Level ▪ Ability to negotiate ▪ Economic understanding ▪ Psycho-social Level ▪ Sensitiveness ▪ Self-confidence ▪ Psychological understanding ▪ Ability to co-operate with different organisations ▪ Ability to collect information ▪ Personal maturity ▪ Ability to co-operate with customers ▪ Ability to cope with set-backs ▪ Knowledge/Training ▪ Economic Level ▪ Knowledge about industrial law ▪ Knowledge about the labour market ▪ Knowledge about subsidies ▪ Work experience ▪ Training in the economic field ▪ Knowledge about occupational matters ▪ Psycho-social Level ▪ Training in the psycho-social field ▪ Training in the field of people with disabilities ▪ Interview and counselling techniques
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The most important are the soft skills, the human features. ▪ Soft skills ▪ Social skills, empathy, tolerance, perseverance, communication skills, listening, respectfulness, creativity, patience, independence ▪ Education and specific information ▪ Education in the social sector, Social/psychological education, Pedagogical education, Knowledge of systems of active employment policy measures, benefits and pensions, knowledge of services within the region



Country	Job coach skills and characteristics
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skills ▪ empathy ▪ ability to cooperate ▪ patience, tolerance ▪ Knowledge to be developed ▪ good communication skills ▪ professional experience (psychological knowledge)
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The composition of the job coach team is most important. ▪ Communication and social skills seem to be the most important skills/characteristics. ▪ empathy ▪ psychological insight ▪ working experience ▪ experience of working with disabled persons ▪ practically inclined ▪ social skills (e.g. able to communicate and co-operate with others) ▪ concerned about job seekers' resources more than problems ▪ be able to work with many things at the same time ▪ have the ability to find people's potentials, what they are good at
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flexible, trained, innovative, patient, knowledgeable of community resources and how to make them accessible ▪ Knowledgeable of pwd, Knowledgeable of labour market, trained to apply SE technologies, with ability to mediate between employers, pwd and families.
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ vision/focus/sensitivity/enablement (the person in the shadow) ▪ knowing when to speak and when to be quiet ▪ marketing-analyse jobs-teach jobs-understanding disability ▪ a good care co-ordinator



6. The strengths of the SE service and areas of possible improvement

According to the respondents, a general strength of the SE service is that it is able to achieve its aims (see point 3: job placement and social integration – S, N, CZ, A, UK, H). The Austrian survey emphasises that even the numerical data shows that this is a successful and effective service for the integration of people with disabilities through job placement.

The second most important strength is the fact that the service is tailor-made and flexible (S, N, CZ, A, UK, H). This makes a quick reaction to problems possible. In the opinion of the respondents it is important to react to emerging problems quickly and thus they think that flexibility within the service and the organisation is indispensable.

In relation to this the Norwegian report underlined the importance of the fact that job coaches were always easy to reach, which is a basic condition for a quick solution to problems.

One of the areas for improvement is the professional knowledge of job coaches. It is a prominent danger that the quality of the service depends to too large an extent on the professional knowledge of job coaches. This was identified by five countries in some form or another (S, N, A, UK, H). Such identification indirectly suggests that the quality of the service depends on the professional knowledge of job coaches. In the Norwegian report such dependence was viewed as an element contributing to the vulnerability of the process.

The lack of awareness of the service among employers and in society in general was articulated as a weakness in two countries (H, A). In the respondents' opinion, PR activities addressing a wider range of people would be necessary in this field.

In two countries (N, CZ), another element identified as an area for improvement concerned the “job coach-client” contact. A high degree of dependence between job coach and client was considered to be an important weakness of the service. As a result, if the job coach leaves the process altogether, the client might feel his position endangered and consequently longer-term employment for the client might be questioned.

Apart from the above-mentioned areas of strengths and weaknesses respondents identified numerous others. Moreover, depending on outside factors, some of the strengths appeared as weaknesses in some countries and vice versa.

For example, while in Great Britain the SE service was considered as cheap compared with similar services, in Spain and the Czech Republic the high costs of the service were mentioned as weaknesses. Also, while in Austria easy access and the already existing network of SE providers were considered to be strengths, in Spain difficult access and in Hungary the lack of a network of SE providers were mentioned as drawbacks.

It can be seen from these suggestions that apart from the identified common elements, depending on the national SE framework and environmental factors different strengths and areas of development were identified by the respondents. The summary of these can be seen in Table 6 below.



Table 6

Country	Strengths of SE	Weaknesses of SE
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ working on the spot (“direct contact”) ▪ sensitiveness for the individual case (“tailor-made packages”) ▪ promoting the personal development of the clients ▪ extension of the “normal network” (e.g. Labour Market Service etc.) ▪ easily accessible ▪ “close to reality” (jobs on the first labour market) ▪ quantitative success (“figures of clients and job arrangements”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ high staff turnover ▪ staff lacking experience ▪ staff lacking job know-how ▪ at present not enough organisations offering this service ▪ “waiting lists” ▪ staff lacking training ▪ too much oriented towards social policy ▪ not enough legal framework for the service ▪ lacking permanent PR
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ complexity of provided care (2) ▪ troubles on workplace are solved immediately ▪ reflects client’s and employer’s needs and provides feedback ▪ open to different types of disability ▪ eliminates discrimination ▪ helps to open society to people with disabilities ▪ respects individuality ▪ helps client to find work ▪ assistants have enough time for clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ closer co-operation with labour offices is missing ▪ quite expensive service ▪ not enough consequential services ▪ sometimes it seems that assistants want to find job more than clients (difficult to recognize real client’s wishes) ▪ stay of assistant on the workplace is not mentioned in any law (possible troubles in case of injury, insurance, competencies) ▪ weak client’s position on the workplace after leaving ▪ demotivating role of subsidies
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ concentrating on permanent job ▪ promotes the development of communication of the clients ▪ gives working experience ▪ helps clients adapt to the working environment ▪ helps clients and employers ▪ provides help to the friends and family ▪ ensures treatment of the individual cases ▪ helps the family background (multiplication effect, improvement of individual living conditions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ lack of legislation ▪ lack of long-term funding (tender system) ▪ not known among employers (is this right or what is meant?) ▪ lack of professional background (education is not sufficient) ▪ in Hungary only special target groups are involved in the SE service (mentally disabled people)



Country	Strengths of SE	Weaknesses of SE
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ possibility of integrating people into ordinary work ▪ can give good follow-up to both job seeker and workplace, both practical and social support ▪ flexibility in the support from job coach (<i>ad hoc</i> help when and where it is needed) ▪ job coaches are very available ▪ are able to work with few job seekers ▪ can be out working directly on the job seekers' working places ▪ good knowledge of the labour market's demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ vulnerability when the job coach teams are small ▪ job seeker can get very connected/dependent on the job coach because of the close cooperation/relationship ▪ sometimes when the job seeker is on his/her own (after the 3-years period in the initiative), he/she can't manage to keep the job, because he/she can't do without the SE support ▪ vulnerability when the job coaches quit their jobs ▪ in some cases the integration in ordinary workplaces leads to the role of a "mascot" for the job seeker and not to the integration of him/her
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ support & zero rejection ▪ individualised support ▪ on the job training ▪ looks after personal autonomy ▪ working with families ▪ accompaniment to labour integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ it depends on the rules of the market ▪ temporary contracts, to take the available jobs etc. ▪ difficult to apply to people with great need of support and if so it is more expensive
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ working-away from day centres ▪ a role model overcoming fear of disability ▪ individual focus based on outcomes ▪ can be cheaper in the long run 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ staff can become too much of a role model ▪ danger of over-identifying with the individual ▪ over-dependent intrinsic rewards are very personal – can expect too much from an individual ▪ limits choice?

Selecting areas for improvement is in close connection with the identified strengths and weaknesses. Respondents formulated improvement potentials in relation to the already identified areas. Thus, answers to these questions further supported the detailed findings above. As it can also be seen from Table 7, responses vary from country to country in agreement with identified weaknesses. However, similarities could also be found here.

In countries where the national framework connected to the SE service and legal background does not exist (CZ, H, S), financiers and legislators see this as a potential area for improvement.

The lack of stable, long-term financing was identified as a general problem in four countries (CZ, H, A, S).



Respondents in several countries see a strong development potential in the training and further education of job coaches. This is in agreement with the earlier defined weakness according to which financiers believe that the quality of the service is largely influenced by the professional and general experience of job coaches.

Additionally, in several countries there are recommendations to improve the PR activity associated with the SE services to improve their visibility, this was also mentioned among the weaknesses.

Table 7

Country	How could SE in general be improved?
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ better training ▪ selection of clients ▪ avoiding the “oversaturation” (for example with PR) of employers ▪ more interaction with employees (i.e. more PR) ▪ more organisations should provide Supported Employment ▪ longer-term contracts with the Federal Offices for Social Affairs ▪ new “figures of success” within the contracts ▪ better differentiation between a “real client” (with an official SE-contract) and those people who only receive counselling ▪ no “waiting lists” (At present there are some initiatives which are not able to provide their service for everyone asking for it) “At least some sort of clearing should be provided then.”
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the key problem is seen in the fact that a legal definition and official status of SE are still missing ▪ labour services are not defined separately from social services resulting in problems with funding SE ▪ real Czech standards of SE, standards that fit for Czech conditions (“Actually there is only a translation of Norwegian standards in use.”)
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ legal background should be clarified ▪ SE should be integrated into the labour market services ⇒ possibility of permanent finance ▪ there should be SE services all over the country ▪ modelling the process (what kind of disabled people are to be employed in given jobs?) ▪ extensive communication of the model to human resources managers ▪ education of the job coaches should be improved



Country	How could SE in general be improved?
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ offer SE also to other vulnerable groups, e.g. long-term unemployed people and people of foreign origin ▪ SE could offer a more differentiated support to, e.g. people with psychiatric disabilities. Give them the opportunity to start working maybe one day a week over a long period, and then increase it to several days when they feel more familiar and secure with the work ▪ a more formal co-operation with others in the rehabilitation system (e.g. the local offices of social affairs, the local health care system) ▪ more information about SE to possible employers in society. This may encourage some of them to try out the initiative ▪ increase and/or maintain the job coaches' qualifications (the job coaches ask/wish for more qualifications on marketing)
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ new regulations to promote this system of labour integration ▪ more support and funds from Administration/Governments
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SE as a coaching service ▪ recognise validity of role not just for vulnerable people but input of everyone's development ▪ getting messages out and about ▪ "Access to work" ▪ more training to carry out support ▪ the "Welfare to Work" agenda will help – Working with all types of disability on a local basis

7. The evaluation system for SE

If we look at the evaluation systems for SE in each country, it can be said that their basis is very similar. However, individual and specific solutions or implementations are found in different countries.

At the same time, in one of the countries (CZ), the evaluation system for SE has not yet been developed. It is, in fact, being developed at the moment. In the Czech Republic applications for financing are evaluated; however, after an application is considered successful, no further evaluation is done or required. In contrast to this practice, in the other five countries there is a system of very comprehensive and regular evaluations.

In all the five countries mentioned above, applicants have to hand in monthly reports with statistical data (e.g. the number of job placements or clients included in the service) related to the SE service. The data is broken down into categories based on the types of disabilities. This is used as a basis for evaluating the success and efficiency of the service.



Additionally, various organisations and financiers in contact with the different types of services provided require written reports at different times. Reports may need to be written with the regularity of about two to six times a year. Such reports usually ask for more comprehensive statistical summaries. In some of the countries, reports of this type contain a professional and a financial review (H), too.

In each country an annual summary report of achievements is required. In almost all cases, such a report must be supplemented with a financial review.

In addition to written reports, with the exception of two countries (CZ, UK), site visits are conducted everywhere. There are two aims of site visits. The first type of aim is mainly to improve co-operation with the SE agency. In countries (S, N) where the aim of the annual report is to improve co-operation, the objective is to evaluate the work together and to discuss tasks to be done in the future.

The second type of aim is partly to jointly evaluate the SE providers' work. However, also sampling the documents and then checking them is part of the visits (especially in Austria and Hungary). In these cases, both the control of the client-related and financial documents are carried out by the financier.

The reviews mentioned above are undertaken twice a year at dates agreed upon in advance, in given intervals (A, N). At the same time though, for instance in Hungary, the contract of the organisation providing the SE service allows for the possibility of a site visit, it does not make it compulsory (S, H). An interesting conclusion is that in countries already having a national framework for providing SE services, site visits are planned regularly.

It can also be seen that in countries where the national framework for the SE service has already been developed (N, UK, A), the individual evaluation of a specific organisation is linked to the national evaluation system.

In general, next to the local and regional data collection and evaluation a national evaluation system is at work, too. For this system data are provided by SE agencies, too.

However, a national evaluation system is built on collecting a wider range of data. In the Norwegian system, national surveys are carried out, whereas in the English system the evaluation sheets filled in by clients have an important role.

In summary, it needs to be emphasised that establishing national evaluation systems should be on the agenda in the near future in countries where this is not yet the case.

When examining the indicators of the evaluation, it can be seen that financiers in all of the mentioned countries are endeavouring to evaluate the SE service both quantitatively and qualitatively and are trying to develop indicators measuring quantity and quality respectively with varying degrees of success.

The Austrian and Hungarian reports underline the fact that financiers still consider it problematic to assess the quality of the SE service. Hungarian financiers see an enormous potential in developing this side of the service. They considered the need for creating a fairly complex evaluation system to be the most important problem. Also, developing such a system would require more money from financiers, and at the same time more work on the part of the users.

In relation to this issue, one of the Austrian financiers said that in a great number of cases the financier does not have access to a reliable methodology developed to evaluate the quality of the service.

In relation to the evaluation of quality, the Norwegian report expresses that at present defining the quality of the service poses a problem. This is because different partners consider different quality criteria to be important for them. The present project may provide help here, through the quality criteria defined in its course.



Based on Appendix 1 containing the summary of the different national evaluation systems, it can be seen that the SE service has generally accepted indicators. Such are, for example, the number of clients whose job placement was successful or the length of time spent in the service. These generally accepted indicators are for the most part quantitative and refer only indirectly to the quality of the service or not at all.

Indicators developed to assist the evaluation of the quality of the SE service promote a much narrower view. In a great number of cases, the point of view for evaluation is marked as quality criteria in the answers given by the financiers (for example, good co-operation and communication among partners). These are, however, mostly indicators that are not useful for evaluation. Such responses support the conclusion arrived at earlier, i.e. that the evaluation of quality cannot only be broken down into quantified indicators. In contrast, it requires the development of a complex evaluation system, and in a great number of cases a new methodology, too.

At the same time, in three countries (UK, A, H) a new element appeared in relation to the qualitative evaluation of the SE service. This can facilitate the evaluation of quality to a great extent. It is the collection of feedback from partners and measuring their satisfaction. In Britain a similar evaluation system has already been developed at the national level. In Austria and Hungary financiers mentioned that partner satisfaction will be incorporated in the evaluation system in the future. Furthermore, the Hungarian financier has been supporting the adoption of quality evaluation criteria for two years at the Salva Vita Foundation, which has focused on measuring the satisfaction of clients and colleagues for a long time.

As quality, a little simplified, means nothing else than satisfying the expressed and latent expectations of both clients and supporters, the types of satisfaction measurement mentioned above might play an important role in evaluating the SE service.

It needs to be noted here that when defining quality in general, not only partner or customer criteria are taken into consideration, such as legal compliance, appropriateness for use, or satisfying social and environmental criteria. These are all equally important (dealing with the field of quality development the 4 + 1 levels of quality are identified: the first level is legal compliance – the second level is the appropriateness for use – the third level is satisfying specific client needs – the fourth level is satisfying latent client needs + the last additional level is taking social considerations into account).

8. The financing system for SE

In relation to financing, a very important question, which has also been mentioned above, arises that influences the form of financing to a great extent. The question is whether Supported Employment is a social or a labour market service?

The type of funding agency depends on the main focus in the respective country. In most countries there is a mixed system of financing involving several agencies.

In countries where the national framework for SE has already been developed (UK, A, N and in this case S too), potential financiers have also been defined. In the Czech Republic and Hungary ways of financing are not clearly defined and a system with mixed financing is still being developed.

At the same time, it also needs to be mentioned that since in Hungary the present government considers SE service to be a labour market service, the question of who and how will finance its social aspects is raised. This is a contradiction because in Hungary the social aspects of SE are also emphasised. Answering this question on funding is one of the most important tasks for the future.



When evaluating the financing systems, the most important problem encountered in each country regardless of its national framework or legal background is the issue of one-year contracts.

At the moment, in each of the countries SE service providers have only one-year contracts. Given this system, service providers find it difficult to formulate long-term goals.

Very often it cannot be predicted what exactly the financiers agree to support when undertaking the financing of the service. For instance, whether they will finance the further education of job coaches or internal quality development, and also to what extent.

Several financiers regarded improving the current short-term financing system as an area of potential development, which further supports the view that this problem needs to be tackled.

Establishing national frameworks could play an important role in this, especially through the development of detailed strategic plans. These provide input information for the SE provider for outlining its own long-term plans.

In relation to this issue, other potentially significant factors are co-operation between financiers and service providers in the development of strategic plans and the discussion of former strategic plans. The practical elements of this already exist in several countries in an informal way.

In summary, it can be concluded that although in some countries the framework for financing the SE service has not yet been developed, both financiers and legislators consider Supported Employment and its financing to be important.

Furthermore, although the countries participating in the project have different national frameworks (e.g. legal background, financing system, network for the service), one can find a great number of basic features shared by all of them. These have been described in detail above.

At the same time, numerous different methods and applications have been developed in the various countries, which could provide practical ideas and a good basis for improvement for the other countries.