



Direct and indirect work with marginalised groups¹

Centre for Development of Public Administration, NGO

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The NGO Centre for Development of Public Administration seeks to provide individuals and organisations professional knowledge and skills to efficiently respond to the challenges of the fast-changing economic and social environments. It follows new developments in Estonia and Europe, and provides innovative solutions in the field of organisation development and democratic governance.

Who identifies the 'marginalised groups'?

The Statistical Office of Estonia defines risk groups relative to the labour market:

55 years of age and older; 16-24 years; no proficient Estonian speakers; young long-term unemployed; long-term unemployed; disabled, released from prison.

The marginalised groups, in sociological research in Estonia, include people in the minority groups like ethnic minorities, people with different sexual orientations, disabled persons, also prostitutes, persons released from prison, i.e. people less visible in society and having fewer opportunities.

Do you have any issues with how these groups are defined?

If so, describe briefly what this means for how you conduct work

We accept the groups as such.

Is funding for your work linked to reaching some or all of these marginalised groups?

Yes, to a certain extent.

We apply funding from the Unemployment Fund (ESF money) to provide training for the unemployed.

Describe (simply) the different marginalised groups your organisation works with:

Ethnic minorities, unemployed, job-seekers.

¹ In the 3rd ICD Conference in Stockholm invited experts from DK, EE, FI and LT were chairing workshops on "What is the 'optimal learning environment' for intercultural dialogue?" For the purpose, all experts had been asked to answer a number of questions beforehand concerning their work with marginalised target groups, which are collected in the paper on hand.

State what DIRECT activities your organisation undertakes with each marginalised group

Ethnic minorities: Workshops for the minority groups, joint workshops and events with the representatives of the core nation.

Unemployed: Training for job seeking skills, reorientation and reintegration in the labour market.

Explain what works successfully about this activity

Dialogue between people from different ethnic backgrounds based on identification and promotion of common interests and values.

Ethnic minorities: Involvement of civil society to support integration processes.

Unemployed: Improvement of coping skills and reorientation to constructive solutions.

Say what evidence there is of this success

Ethnic minorities: Increased communication, increased understanding, breaking of stereotypes and myths about different nationalities; increased networking and participation in social events.

Unemployed: New careers, discovery of potential and talent.

Does this activity promote intercultural dialogue? If so how?

Ethnic minorities: *Yes, we have brought together people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to build bridges of understanding, develop respect for difference and diversity.*

Unemployed: *Intercultural dialogue is promoted by participation of people from diverse professional and cultural backgrounds.*

What evidence do you have of ICD success if any?

For example, we have provided a common space for people from different ethnic backgrounds to practice culture together.

Do you undertake any activities which may have an INDIRECT benefit to marginalised groups?

The trainers/consultants delivering training/consultations develop a broader understanding of the realities, problems and challenges faced by marginalised groups, which helps improve the quality of training/consultations.

Trainers/consultants working as teams engage in exchange of experience/expertise to design better ways to provide training/support to marginalised groups.

Joint seminars involving representatives of ethnic minority NGOs, NGOs representing the core nation, and mixed NGOs increase mutual understanding and help break stereotypes and myths about different ethnic groups.

Provision of learning opportunities and discussion fora support involvement, social inclusion and help avoid further marginalisation.

If so, do you collect evidence of this INDIRECT work?

We supported involvement of NGOs in promoting integration processes in Estonia, in particular in the capital city Tallinn where ethnic Estonians represents about 50% of the population. The initiative was taken under the City of Tallinn's Civic Peace Programme based on the premise that more active participation of minorities in social life is needed. (Integration Strategy 2008-2013).

Do you have any examples of work (DIRECT or INDIRECT) with marginalised groups that may help to illustrate your work and any points about this work that you think are important to share?

Over the recent years, the Centre has been running projects for people from different social and cultural backgrounds, among them representatives of different ethnic groups living in Estonia. Doing so, the Centre has been instrumental in facilitating intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding between different ethnic groups living in Estonia; especially in Tallinn, a multicultural city where more than 120 nations are represented. Our focus has been on building mutual trust via joint learning and practicing culture, and involving the grassroots level in enhancing integration processes.

With the economic downturn in Estonia, we have increasingly started working with unemployed people, both old and young, to boost their job-seeking skills, support their re-entry into the labour market so as to mitigate the consequences of the crisis for them, to provide new orientation and guide them to constructive solutions.