

SHELTERED WORKSHOPS IN THE EU



SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

Sheltered workshops offer *work and rehabilitation* to persons with disabilities¹ with the objective to empower the individual to either develop or regain the working capacity and promote personal development.

Definitions

The European Commission defines 'sheltered employment' as: "employment in an undertaking where at least 50 % of workers are disabled"².

A broader and more comprehensive definition is to be found in the Interest Group on Occupational Services project partnership³, who defined sheltered workshops as services «offered to persons with a disability who due to their impairment are currently not able to work in the open labor market. The disability hinders them to cope with the demands in a competitive open labor market. Due to the type and degree of their disability, those persons rely partly on sustainable, structured and lasting support schemes. In some member states of the European Union a special labor status is recognised. Common for all is the need for a daily structured support which employers on the open labor market are not able to supply. This support is very often not limited to the work place, but very often contains therapeutical and other additional supports to stabilize and further develop social and personal skills».

DIFFERENT TYPE OF ACTIVITIES AND MODELS OF SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

Sheltered workshops offer various types of job profiles requiring manual skills, reasoning, creativity and/or communication skills to develop activities in several fields:

- ★ ICT (e.g. copy centers, digital archiving, etc.)
- ★ customer services (e.g. catering, laundry, retail sales, etc.)
- ★ handiwork (e.g. packaging, dismantling, assembling, etc.)
- ★ community services (e.g. gardening, cleaning of common and private spaces, etc.).

Although most of the activities in sheltered workshops take place in a permanent working place, also alternative forms of work and employment in companies under the special conditions of sheltered workshops are available.

Models of sheltered workshops

- ★ **On-site work** (sometimes open to the general public, e.g. restaurants, laundries, etc.)
- ★ **Secondment:** temporary or permanent transfer of a person to another assignment or location
- ★ **Outplacement:** placement in the open labour market environment under the conditions of sheltered workshops
- ★ **Mobile units:** small teams of workers hired by external organizations or by public institutions to take care of various community services (e.g. gardening in public areas, cleaning in public or private entities, etc.) under the conditions of sheltered workshops

¹ These structures-working places are meant for persons with intellectual disabilities and also to people with a different impairment (i.e. persons with mental disabilities, persons with severe and multiple disabilities, persons with traumatic brain injuries) and persons from socially disadvantaged categories.

² Art. 2 § 21 Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008.

³ «Quality work settings for all. Project report» (www.easpd.eu).

OVERVIEW OF SHELTERED WORKSHOPS IN THE EU

There are no figures available on the total of persons in sheltered workshops in Europe; however, a good estimate is an amount of **between 2 and 3 million users/workers** all over Europe. At present it's hard to collect precise figures as there are no common definitions on disability, therefore the situation in each country is hardly comparable.

A few figures have been collected in past and relatively recent studies⁴: the table below contains a comparative analysis of sheltered workshops features in different EU countries.

Distribution and characteristics of sheltered workshops in 8 EU countries⁵

Country	Nr of legal entities providing sheltered workshops	Nr of users/workers in sheltered workshops	Specific name of sheltered workshop type of structures per country	Legislative framework
Austria	N/A	19.000	Inclusive Workplace Enterprise	Ministry of Social Affairs
Belgium (Flanders)	67	16.000	Sheltered workshops	Labour Code
France	1345	118.211	"ESATs" (Etablissements et Services d'Aide par le Travail)	Code of Social Action and Families: 2005 Act for Equal Rights and Opportunities, Participation and Citizenship of Persons with Disabilities
Germany	724	297 670	Workshops for adapted work	Social Code
Greece	N/A	1805	"PPE": sheltered productive workshops "EKEP": special centres of social and vocational integration	Ministry of Health and Welfare: Law 1836/1989 § 14 establishes special productive centres (PEKE) and Law 2646/1998 § 17 establishes sheltered productive centres (PPE)
Italy	6982 This figure corresponds to the total of social cooperatives (Type A and B), thus it includes also social cooperatives that do not provide exclusively services for persons with disabilities (Type B).	N/A	Social cooperatives	Ministry of Labour : Law 381/1991 establishes cooperatives; Law 68/1999 establishes the right to work for people with disabilities
The Netherlands	92	102.000	Social enterprises	Ministry of Social Affairs

4 For further information see: «SWOT analysis: Adapted work settings in the EU» (www.easpd.eu) and «Quality work settings for all. Project report» (www.easpd.eu).

5 See reference 4



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This publication was made possible thanks to the kind support of BAG:WfbM (www.bagwfbm.de), the German national network of sheltered workshops and UNAPEI (www.unapei.org), the French national umbrella organization for persons with intellectual disabilities and their families

 This publication is sponsored by the Progress programme of the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. It reflects the view only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

This publication is sponsored by:



Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft
Werkstätten für behinderte Menschen e.V.

