

Foreword of the Editors

Target groups, such as the older unemployed or migrants¹, are common subjects within labour market politics. There is a concrete need for target group monitoring efforts in order to create a satisfactory transparency in regional labour markets. This enables the development of strategies directly adapted to the situation and needs of these target groups to improve their labour market participation. We are pleased to publish this collection with approaches to and concepts for target group monitoring from various European regions. The applicability of these approaches and concepts for various target groups is also discussed. This creates a broad basis which regional actors in Europe can draw upon.

The present volume is the third collection in a series of publications treating regional labour market monitoring. In the first volume an overview of the German situation was laid out. Volume 2 followed this up with a systematic presentation of the approaches in Europe². Here, in the current volume, the intention is to conceptually expand beyond the branch-oriented approaches that have been used to date. The general concept of regional labour market monitoring was enriched through the specification and integration of monitoring target groups. As in the previous volumes, this book is based on long-term ongoing discussions within the European Network of Regional Labour Market Monitoring³. The results of these discussions are reflected in the contributions to this volume. Over forty network members from 15 different European countries are involved in this discussion and their unique perspectives and experiences have been very beneficial for the discourse. A salient feature of the European Network is the enriching exchange, not only of the various national and cultural elements but also of the practical forms: scientific studies, experience reports and applied political consultation. The results of this cross-pollination are represented in this volume which we now proudly present.

It cannot go without noting that a significant driving force for the creation of this anthology was the EU-funded project 'Development of a Target Group Monitoring to Support the Integration of Migrants in Employment'⁴. This project arose from a working group within the European Network and has very actively driven the discussion on target group monitoring over the last 18 months. It also provided the material support for the realization of this publication.

All network members as well as everyone interested or involved in regional labour market monitoring in some way are invited to be inspired by the approaches and discussions in this anthology. The contributors and the editors warmly encourage your feedback, comments and questions to this volume.

¹ In this volume the term migrant or migration is most of the time used to describe immigrants and immigration.

² Volume 1: Larsen, C./ Dera, S./ Knobel, C./ Schmid, A. (2005): Regionales Arbeitsmarktmonitoring. Ansätze, Konzepte und Entwicklungen in Deutschland. München. Mehring; Volume 2: Larsen, C./ Mathejczyk, W./ Schmid, A. (2007): Monitoring of Regional Labour Markets in European States. München. Mehring.

³ www.regionallabourmarketmonitoring.net

⁴ The project was financed by the European Commission – Directorate General 'Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities' within the Programme 'Mutual Learning' and the Hess Ministry of Social Affairs. The Project ran from December 2006 through June 2008. www.targetgroupmonitoring.net

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