With a social aim

Work integration social enterprises offer new opportunities to people who suffer from social and professional handicaps caused by their exclusion and their marginal role in society. The definition of the target groups is made on national level and can include long-term unemployed, people with very low qualification, people over 50 years, young people, minorities…

In the total of 51,876 workers of the study, 67% found a job in the same or another work integration enterprise or on the first labour market; 33% became self-employed or started an educational programme; 48.5% have left and are again unemployed, sick, have died…

In 2015 the results for the 12,954 disadvantaged workers leaving the 807 work integration social enterprises interviewed and representing 9 EU member states were as follows:

- 48.5% found a job in the same or another work integration enterprise or on the first labour market;
- 33% became self-employed or started an educational programme;
- 16.5% have left and are again unemployed, sick, have died…
- 35%
Work integration social enterprises are independent economic entities characterized by three identifying principles:

1. The social and professional integration of individuals who due to their exclusion and their relegation to a marginal role in society have fallen victim to increasing social and professional handicaps;
2. Enterprises at the core of the economic system, frequently one of the major factors in the phenomenon of exclusion;
3. Enterprises with a strong pedagogical dimension. The Work Integration Social Enterprises initiate training and educational programs designed on the basis of existing potential of the target group and develop this individual potential (at professional level and in its participation in society) within the enterprise.

They vary a lot from one country to another. Those economic entities can be organised by different legal status: commercial, association, foundation, cooperatives and others created especially for implementing activities with the aim of inclusion. The models for integrating disadvantaged workers vary also: springboard model (f. ex. France, Spain), permanent models (Belgium) or a mix between the two models (f. ex. Italy), the same applies to the target group who is defined on national level. There are also differences in the classification of the workers (work contract versus trainee).

The big differences in the organisation of work integration social enterprises in Europe is due to the historical development, the culture and the rules that vary from one country to the other, but they are located in all kinds of regions creating local jobs and committed to social inclusion and development.

At the moment, ENSIE gathers 28 national and regional networks, representing 19 EU member states (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Spain, France, Luxembourg, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, United Kingdom, Slovenia, Sweden) and also Switzerland and Serbia.

All these networks aim at social inclusion of disadvantaged people, adapted to local conditions. In total there are 3170 enterprises employing more than 270 000 people.

With economic efficiency

A sample of 807 work integration social enterprises, representing 19 EU member states and 14 ENSIE member networks of different levels have participated in the study “IMPACT WISEs 2015” show a total turn over of 727,782,035,60 euro resulting in an average turn over of 901,836,48 euro.

Work integration social enterprises are involved in many different sectors, but they act as pioneers in the fields related to waste processing, temporary employment and green care.