

Impact and added value in our regions

Regional Learning and Regional Results in Wallonia

Within the Belgian partnership, the Article 6 project has provided a much better knowledge about the different actors in the Liège area and the role they play – and can play in the future – in the regional restructuring process.

As Liège is in the middle of a restructuring process, the project has provided ideas on how to introduce methods and ways of co-operation, which are less traditional than the ones used until now.

In this connection, The Belgian partners have first wished to constitute a **regional signal panel** of about ten persons, composed of technicians and of practitioners. The basic criterion being the choice of persons who, through their activity had to have prospects in comparison with the future of the territory. The political representatives were excluded from the panel, the principal objective to use the results of the investigation being an assistance tool to decision.

The realisation of the interviews was to allow the compendium and the treatment of differing interpretations of the principal economical and social actors of the territory in comparison with the key sectors of the Region (Regional Key Competencies), while considering all at once the current position of the employment local basin and its future (prospective approach).

The significant number of reports/ratios and investigations realised in LIEGE concerning the socio-economic future of the employment basin, led us to reduce the number of persons to question and to target the original character of a *confrontation between the "first-concerned"* (workers laid-off, advisers from the trade unions of the reconversion units and advisers from the Public Employment Service) *and a thorough privileged witness of the evolution of the employment territory* : Mrs Bernadette MERENNE, professor for economic geography from LIEGE University, involved for many years in the study of strategies related to the economic redeployment of the LIEGE Region.

Indeed, regarding to the socio-economical context of the Liege region, we wished to study not only the strategies implemented in the territory in order to accompany new industrial changes but also *personal and collective prospects* of the employment basin inhabitants. According to testimonies of the first being concerned by the economical redeployment process of LIEGE's employment area : some workers laid-

off aged between 40 and 50, with a manual worker's status, and of advisers in charge of their reorientation.

The production of **the movie "Où tu vas?"** (Where you're going"), another product from the project *"Regional Key Competencies"* followed the first interviews from the RSP. Interested by the approach, the film Director has also decided to *begin with the personal experience of the dismissed workers to illustrate the thematic of the economical redeployment within the LIEGE Region*. The University contributed to the whole shooting. The movie is therefore in direct link of our contribution to the process of the "Regional signal panel". The film has been directly projected in different places, and is seen as a *usefull and pedagogical tool* for considering and discuss the issue of the restructuration process in the region.

The socio-economic actors in the Liège area has already been through a **scenario planning process**, which has produced the document "Liège 2020", and having been through the scenario planning process in the project, only underline the usefulness of the methodology, and has added valuable additional thoughts to the process in Liège.

The work with the Article 6 project is perfectly merging with the overall restructuring process in Liège, and provides the partnership with extra resources and ideas to enforce the process and co-operation in the region to focus on future key competences.