



WORK INTEGRATION SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN GERMANY

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1. The labour market problem

For some decades now, unemployment has proved to be the most important social problem in German society. Discussions about its origins evoke changes in the economic structure, an unequal distribution of work and income, a mismatch between available and required skills, and also the consequences the process of reunification had on East German industries. Recent hopes in an economic upswing and a change of social and economic policies were disappointed during 2001 and 2002. In 2001, unemployment has increased again to 7.8% (Jouhette, 2002).

Like in other Western countries, the risk of losing one's job or of remaining unemployed for a longer time is not the same for all categories of workers. New industries are looking for skilled personnel, but low-skilled people have little chance to find a job. The rate of long-term unemployment has been increasing during the last ten years. In 2001, more than 50% of the unemployed had been jobless for more than one year (Jouhette, 2002). Among these, youngsters without formal qualification, elder people, and workers with disabilities or problems of health form the "hard core" (Gaß *et al.*, 1997). Thus, Germany does not only have to cope with a passing phase of unemployment. Many people are lacking basic preconditions to take part in the labour market or experience a growing social distance to the ordinary labour force. Like elsewhere in the Western world, there is a risk of social exclusion, going along with a tendency of gentrification and spatial segregation. It is through this evolution that a new agenda of work integration has emerged in Germany.

2. Public policies and the institutionalisation of work integration social enterprises

For many years now, public policies in Germany have been trying to attack the problem sketched above by strategies in line with contemporary mainstreams of economic governance. One of the approaches used in the fight against long-term unemployment was to support organizations running specific programmes of labour market integration. These organizations generally held a not-for-profit status and were engaged in a variety of educational and occupational activities. Importantly, it seems that there are links between the development of labour market policies and the evolution of these "work integration social enterprises" (WISEs).

In the following sections, we will introduce the basic institutions of German labour market and social policies. Secondly, we will describe the recent evolution of these policies. Thirdly, the anatomy of the German not-for-profit sector will be sketched in order to show in two subsequent chapters what the place of social enterprises in this sector is. Finally, some rough

assumptions concerning the impact of the WISEs' activity as well as future prospects will be presented.

2.1. German labour market and social policy institutions

In Germany, two institutions are in charge of labour market policy in a broader sense:

- the Federal Labour Office, funded by contributions to the unemployment insurance and additional subsidies from the federal budget, both on the basis of the so-called "*Sozialgesetzbuch*" (SGB), Volume III;
- local municipalities, with their own tax-based budget for financing social assistance on behalf of the so-called "*Bundessozialhilfegesetz*" (BSHG, Federal Social Assistance Act).

The Federal Labour Office is concerned with the general promotion of salaried employment. Its administrative boards – both on the central and the lower levels – are composed of representatives of trade unions, employer organizations, and the federal government. The labour office is organized as a multi-tiered institution, with local offices having some influence on the implementation of general policies. The task structure of the office(s) is threefold: first of all, it takes care of people who lost their job by paying unemployment allowances (this is commonly called a "passive labour market policy"). A second task is placement. Placement is an instrument for the active integration of unemployed people into the first labour market. Finally, the office is funding various measures for qualifying and (re)employing people, mostly carried out by (more or less) independent for-profit or not-for-profit organizations. The placement, qualification and employment activities are referred to as being an "active or activating labour market policy". Passive and active labour market policies are subject to central regulations. Yet, local labour offices may lay special emphasis on active policies if they feel that a particular need for such measures exists in their region.

By tradition, German municipalities are primarily affected by the unemployment problem as payers of social assistance. People who are not entitled to unemployment allowances may claim social assistance to be covered by the municipal social budget. With long-term unemployment considerably increasing in many municipalities, local governments, for their own budgets' sake, began to invest in offering training facilities and giving temporary work to the recipients of social assistance. In developing a more active policy approach they installed, in a sense, measures that were parallel to those of the Federal Labour Offices. One way of institutionalising the own approaches of municipalities was to build up special sub-organizations concerned with programmes of labour market integration. Since these programmes proved to be quite effective, the municipalities became an interesting partner for the local units of the Federal Labour Office. A firm partnership between the municipalities and these units developed, entailing stable routines of cooperation and deliberation.

It should be noted that a given work integration enterprise (WISE) may use a combination of programmes, thus receiving at the same time subsidies from the municipality on the one hand, and from the Federal Labour Office on the other. Moreover, there are additional programmes run by the counties. Hence, for studying publicly supported initiatives for labour market integration one has to account for a high diversity of mixes of different program resources (Deml 2000, Schmid/Blanke 2001).

2.2. Trends in public policies

From passive to active labour market policy

As briefly sketched above, German labour market policy is shaped by a dualism of passive and active instruments. The passive instruments include first of all the earnings-related unemployment benefit ("*Arbeitslosengeld*"), based on a social insurance system and paid by the Federal Employment Office. When the entitlement to unemployment benefit expires, the unemployed person then, secondly, enters into the regime of unemployment relief ("*Arbeitslosenhilfe*"). In case of apparent need, and on the condition that all the possibilities of self-help are exhausted, finally and third of all, social assistance steps in. It is financed by the municipal social assistance offices. While these passive measures were absolutely predominant in times of full employment, the relevance of active measures strongly increased since the beginnings of mass unemployment.

In May 2001, a total of 3 million persons received payments from the unemployment insurance or other kinds of passive subsidies: 1.85 million in West Germany and 1.25 million in East Germany. The largest part of these people received earnings-related benefits (1.65 million) or unemployment assistance (1.45 million) (Federal Labour Office 2001). Accordingly, public expenditure for passive measures was quite high. While in 1960 only 0.6 billion euros had been spent (mostly in the form of unemployment benefits), the total "bill" had increased to 44.6 billion euros by 1991. It reached 69.2 billion euros in 1999, corresponding to an increase of 55.2% between 1991 and 1999 (Idw 2001, p. 75). After a continuous rise of the amount of unemployment benefit and relief before 1997 (in Western as well as in Eastern Germany), the expenditure decreased until 2000 before starting to grow again.

In 2000, the net volume of subsidies based on the Federal Social Assistance Act was 20.4 billion Euros. This figure, however, also includes transfers for handicapped and care-dependent people. Leaving that aside, the social assistance offices' expenditure in 2000 amounted to 8.5 billion Euros – this is nearly a quarter of the amount paid to jobless people entitled to unemployment allowances (Statistical Federal Office 2001).

Public employment schemes as a starting point

Between the mid-1970s and the mid-1990s, the "second labour market" of quasi-jobs, financed by the unemployment insurance and by social assistance based programmes, was generally accepted in Germany as an instrument to cope with unemployment. Labour market policy was thus not confined to paying allowances but was also oriented towards activities of re-skilling and of improving the overall employability of the jobless. A major tool of this approach became the so-called "*Arbeitsbeschaffungsmaßnahme*" (ABM; public employment scheme). This instrument, financed through the unemployment insurance, allowed for publicly subsidizing regular jobs, thus offering income and occupational experience to the unemployed for a certain period. In the seventies and eighties, numerous job facilities of this kind were set up by agreements between the Federal Labour Office and organizations willing to employ people on this basis. The measures were to permit people to get a combination of work and income, and sometimes they also aimed at creating innovative services in fields where market did not provide needed products and services. It was through this channel that early forms of social enterprises came into being. However, these enterprises soon faced the problem of offering such occupations without competing with local business. In addition to this, they had to come to terms with an increasingly dense public regulation that pushed them

to target people with numerous lacks and disadvantages by organising fixed-term occupational activities; obviously with such a clientele prevailing it became nearly impossible to become as well a promoter of new services and subsequent jobs to be stabilised over time.

Since the end of the nineties, a further step has been taken. The Federal Labour Offices turned away from promoting this kind of public employment. Even though these employment measures had in their vast majority turned into social "shock absorbers" or at best into entry-zones to the "real" economy, it was supposed that there would be the danger of the upcoming of an artificial parallel labour market. Instead, a growing emphasis was now laid upon the placement of unemployed people into the private sector. As a consequence, the new policies cut back subsidies to the "second labour market", turned them more clearly into a mere transitional zone for (re) gaining employability. Consequently, some WISEs reduced their activities whereas others engaged increasingly in the issues of profiling, placement and training that gained importance.

New developments and discussions in active labour market policy

Between 1991 and 2000, the overall expenditure on active labour market policy increased by about 10% in Western Germany, and at present it amounts to about 8 billion euros. Political decision-makers held that this high expenditure had to be justified by performance data. Thus, an increasing number of impact analyses (including comparisons of already existing studies) has been conducted recently (Fels *et al.*, 1999, 2000; Rabe, 2000; ZEW, 2000). A so-called benchmarking group was set up to evaluate labour market policies in Germany on a broader scale. Like many evaluations before, it referred to a standard criterion which was the success of active policies in bringing jobless people back into ordinary jobs; thus, by no surprise, direct placement activities turned out to have the strongest effects in this respect, while programmes that provided for time limited occupation outside the regular labour markets proved to be the least effective.

However, this kind of evaluation may appear one-sided. On the one hand, it is true that the impact of the publicly financed programmes on the integration into the first labour market is not very high, in some cases even negative (Fels *et al.*, 2000; Rabe, 2000). On average, only 30% of the participants in the employment measures are integrated into the first labour market after the end of the project. However, effects other than placement have to be taken into account as well, when it comes to an evaluation of activities of second labour market organisations. Giving temporary work to people in programmes of urban renewal or in services that cover social needs may reduce the overall risk of social exclusion in a given community. Furthermore, the success of placement strategies proved to be limited in regions with low growth and employment rates. In Eastern Germany, where growth and employment dynamics have been stagnating for years, the number of unemployed successfully placed can obviously be nothing but very small. Considering the question of effectiveness, one also has to be aware of the fact that a successful placement, instead of creating additional work offers, may entail an effect of substitution, at the expense of the groups that are not covered by these programmes. Finally, not all of the unemployed are supposed to need advice and placement support.

In order to target measures to specific subgroups, the so-called "profiling" method (i.e. building subgroups of unemployed persons according to their relative employability) is increasingly applied at present (Eberts et O'Leary 1997). The aim is a better targeting of active labour market measures when it comes to the definition of objectives and to the evaluation of their effects (ZEW, 2000, p. 153).

What about the rating of other measures by the benchmarking group?

- Vocational training became rated as the second best instrument with regard to its effectiveness (Fels *et al.*, 2000). However, in Germany only few unemployed are concerned by this instrument, with the trend pointing downward. Even though the results of various evaluations were quite heterogeneous, the effectiveness of occupational training is supposed to have altogether increased since 1993 (ZEW 2000, 198).
- Publicly financed employment, finally, became rated by the benchmarking as being among the least effective measures concerning the integration of unemployed into the labour market. Further evaluations endorsed this assessment, but confined its validity to the case of Eastern Germany. Opponents against programs for such employment measures argue that the effect of such contracts on the participants' success on the regular labour market is neutral at its best. Yet recent studies also showed that publicly financed employment turned out to be effective to different degrees for different groups: it was first and foremost effective for persons with little chances for reemployment (Wittig-Koppe, Trube, 2000; ZEW, 2000, p. 207).
- Public wage subsidies were considered to be the least effective instrument of active employment policy in Germany, notwithstanding the overall increase of their importance between 1980 and 2000 (Deutscher Bundestag, 1995, p. 11; ZEW, 2000, p. 210).

Table 1 gives an overview of the number of unemployed persons who were taking part in measures of active labour market policy in September 1998 and in September 2001. It makes distinctions a) between East and West Germany and b) with respect to the instruments applied. In addition, the calculations take into account the overall increase of the clientele.

Table 1: Participants of the measures (in thousands)

Instruments	West Germany			East Germany		
	Sep 98	Sep 01	WR 98 - 01	Sep 98	Sep 01	WR 98 - 01
Placements	240	237	-1.3	101	77	-23.8
Training	45	25	-44.4	33	19	-42.4
Publicly financed jobs	80	58	-27.5	417	175	-58.0
Wage subsidies	17	23	35.3	4	13	225.0

WR = increase rate

Source: Federal Labour Office

The trend is towards strengthening placement and reducing employment programmes. Many actors and experts hope that thus, frictional unemployment will be successfully combated and that labour market policy will put a stronger emphasis on prevention. There are questions, however, about the effects this strategy shift will have on the long-term unemployed and on all those whose unemployment is primarily due to transformations in the economic structure of the labour market.

Although long-term unemployment has increased both in Western and Eastern Germany, more recently the promotion of programmes and projects based on publicly financed jobs was concentrated on Eastern Germany, mainly because of the higher overall rate of unemployment in this part of the country (Birkhölzer, Lorenz, 2001). What is striking as well is the reduction in programmes for further vocational training.

During the last years, an overall separation of labour market policy on the one hand and economic policy on the other has taken place. Nowadays, labour market policy is reconsidered by some German scholars as a kind of "labour market process policy", that is, a policy coordinating the supply and the demand side (Kühl, 1997, p. 53). This approach gives room for measures which aim at creating tailored jobs for specific groups of unemployed – e.g. by introducing a special low wage sector or by supporting the creation of service jobs meeting new private and public needs. A low wage sector is currently introduced in various federal states. It foresees complementary benefits to the employees' income and provides an incentive for the formerly long-term unemployed people to work. Furthermore, the introduction of service cheques for private households was tested at the end of the nineties, in order to promote household-related services. As these examples show, there is a general debate addressing the real demand for low-skilled labour in the private service market (BA, 2001; ZEW, 2001).

Three interesting trends: "activation", "local development", privatisation

As already stated, there is a tendency of putting more emphasis on measures tailored to the individual person's needs and competences since the end of the nineties. Referring to approaches and debates on the level of the EU, the idea of "employability" made its way through the National Labour Act. The core concept is that of "activation". It stresses the principle of "support and challenge" and has been translated into a new instrument of labour market policy: since 2001, a "profiling" has to be done in each and every case and an integration contract has to be passed between every person registered as unemployed and the Federal Labour Offices. The concept of "profiling" as a first assessment of the degree of employability of unemployed persons and as a preparation of an integration contract is still poorly developed in Germany though, and there is an overall lack of experience in this domain. Qualitative instruments as e.g. used in the Netherlands or concepts of Case Management that take account of the whole scope of needs of individuals can only rarely be found. Profiling as a routine measure of the Federal Labour Office, however, provides for unification and for a formalisation of information concerning the unemployed. On the other hand, the level of flexibility expected from them has been increased. Jobless persons have to accept employment offers not necessarily corresponding with their qualifications or previous activities (Rehm, Schmid, 2001). The integration contract defines the mutual tasks and duties of the two contracting parties in view of the quickest possible way of labour market reintegration. The overall objective is to develop an integration plan in accordance with the profile of the unemployed person, that is, his or her needs and competences. If the unemployed person refuses to cooperate, for example by rejecting an employment offer deemed to be suitable for him or her, the labour administration is entitled to reduce the level of social assistance payments.

Another interesting tendency with some impact on strategies against unemployment is constituted by the fact that during the 1990s labour market policy has increasingly opened up to other policy areas. While at present the Federal Labour Office is predominantly turning its efforts towards placement, major actors and organisations of the policies that have been set up by the municipalities are considering a broader approach. They are trying to combine social, labour market, urban and economic policies in order to find answers to the problems of urban segregation and the decline of city quarters. From this point of view, combating social and occupational exclusion means to find new ways in economic and urban development, including the revival of the local economy; the central state and the federal states are running special programmes in this field (Evers et Koob, 2002). A good example for this is the so-called "Social City" programme. It is targeting urban areas that deal with structural economic

deficits, high unemployment, crime, educational deficits and an insufficient public infrastructure. The "Social City" programme tries to react to these problems by networking various policies. Municipalities participating in this programme are invited to run projects that improve public infrastructure, educational facilities, the integration of foreigners, and the performance of the local economy. The core concept of the approach is to bring various local actors together in networks, to provide for synergies, and to bundle various resources, supporting especially the involvement of not-for-profit organisations as important local partners. The promotion of work-integration can thus be an important part of a broader strategy for social integration.

There is a third trend of labour market policies to be mentioned in this overview. For a couple of years now, public authorities have been delegating the tasks of profiling and placing unemployed persons to for-profit enterprises. One example is the Dutch company MAATWERK; other well-established enterprises from the commercial personal service sector have been entering this field, too (Helbig, 2001, pp. 33ss). Recent trends in public policy confirm this tendency of privatising the provision of occupational integration in Germany. Thus, competition between social enterprises and commercial integration business is already a fact in quite a number of regions.

WISEs and labour market policies in Germany

What does the above depicted evolution of public policies mean for WISEs? There is a broad range of implications. First of all, with the growing emphasis on placement and a decreasing investment in the second labour market, the position of organizations specialized in the placement of unemployed has been strengthened. Conversely, WISEs which are busy in running services, selling "social" products and enhancing employability by subsidized but ordinary job facilities are facing hard problems. Generally, there is a clear incentive for focusing on an ad-hoc-integration of the employees into the "first" labour market. At any rate, a WISE can only survive if it succeeds in placing a sufficient number of unemployed.

The overall evolution has considerable effects on the management of WISEs, especially with regard to their strategy of selection of addressees as employees and people to be trained. Within the given regulatory framework, WISEs are prone to increasingly concentrate on those groups of unemployed that can easily be placed ("cream-skimming"). Conversely, if they adhere to the objective of supporting foremost the very disadvantaged groups, they risk to be threatened in their mere existence.

So far, WISEs have had difficulties in using the employment potential in the field of household-related services. The Federal Labour Office in general sets limits to the scope of activities in which WISEs engage. A general rule, already mentioned in the beginning, requires that programmes for time limited work should only produce goods and services that are not already made available by the business sector or the public sector. This is meant to avoid substitution effects and/or unfair competition by publicly subsidised work. Additionally, by focusing on the aspect of placement, the Federal Labour Offices do not support WISEs in developing own service fields that might constitute more than "playgrounds" for those who have to train there in order to get a better employability.

However, WISEs are not left without any choice but to follow the incentives of the public policies just mentioned. They still may prove and further develop their integrative potential. They may e.g. take part in the above mentioned "Social City"- programmes or combine job facilities with further measures of social support, thus addressing more general social needs

(health, housing etc.). At the same time, WISEs can be useful for maintaining or improving local infrastructures in their neighbourhood.

Note that in Germany, dealing with work integration may as well be a matter of those not-for-profit organisations that do not aim at this matter in the first place. The more established not-for-profit organisations, by tradition very busy in the provision of social services (see our brief overview below), have also moved towards problems of unemployment, with their central focus being on health, care and counselling services that are delegated to them by the welfare state. From the 1980s on, they have begun to consider work integration as a new field of action, especially with respect to the prevention of poverty. They have set up a range of own projects which provide work to people with low employability, the additional effect being the creation of a pool of employees to be recruited in their own enterprises, where low qualified and low paid labour is increasingly required (Schmid, Schulz, 2000).

This way of linking social and occupational integration is not confined to large and stable organizations. It can also be found in small, local initiatives that are well embedded in local civil society. The efforts of these civic groups are often triggered by the repercussions of social exclusion, for instance by persisting or increasing long-term unemployment, poverty, health problems, homelessness and the problem of indebtedness. Initiatives that so far have concentrated their activities in the fields of social policy now open up to labour market policy topics as well. There are two kinds of activity. On the one hand, these initiatives are concerned with a broad number of social topics in the fields of culture, leisure, health and well-being, and they begin to combine these activities with labour market aims. On the other hand, there are new initiatives for organizing labour market measures. In both cases, the activity is to a high degree based on voluntary work, but most initiatives entail as well some paid employment (core staff, administration, key-professionals). Using labour policy subsidies then is a means to run a social project on a broader scale. For this reason, these initiatives cannot take up the most disadvantaged groups on the labour market, given the comparatively low work performance of the latter.

Summary

For the last two decades, the development of German labour market policies has been undergoing a fundamental change, the outcome of which cannot be foreseen yet. There is a general trend away from the financing of unemployment towards fostering employment through institutions of labour market policy. Basically this has given room for WISEs that try to combine the development of services that meet private and public needs and the social and occupational integration of unemployed persons, with different aims and measures depending on the degree of employability and general social competence of the unemployed. The jobs created may be used for training purposes, for preparing new stable employment or they may serve as a transitional zone. However public labour market policies and programmes have developed in a way that tends to reduce, downgrade or modify the activities and orientations of WISEs. These developments in German labour market policies may be summarized as follows:

- an increasing strategic emphasis on preventive labour market policy as well as on the reduction of frictional and short-term unemployment;
- more recently, investments in placement instead of publicly supported employment programmes (on the second labour market), serving as a starting point for creating innovative products and services and/or as "real" bridges to ordinary labour markets;
- a shift in the target-group-orientation towards shortly employable unemployed people.

There are however as well other tendencies that may prove as useful for aims other than specialised tasks in improving individual employability:

- an increasing importance of programmes run by municipalities;
- an increasing role of programmes against urban decay (relating issues of occupation and concerns with local and economic development);
- a certain interest of traditional not-for-profit associations to take up the issue of unemployment and to integrate it into their organizational domain, as well as a propensity of further forces of civil society to get involved into programmes of labour market policy.

2.3. The not-for-profit sector in Germany

Dealing with the role and performance of WISEs in German society requires some broader knowledge about the position and the impact not-for-profit organisations have in that country. This is also crucial for grasping the (potential) contribution of civil society, in particular with a view to the "social capital" (Evers, 2001) these enterprises "process" in the fight against social exclusion.

The academic discussion about the not-for-profit sector in Germany is still relatively young. A first highlight of social science research on non-profit organizations was the Johns Hopkins study conducted during the 1990s. It is true that some not-for-profit organisations had already been subject to scientific research in the national context (for example welfare associations and trade unions, mostly with reference to the concept of "corporatism", see Alemann, 1989). However, these studies, which were primarily inspired by political and normative considerations, did not pay sufficient attention to the labour market role of not-for-profit organizations, emphasised by the Johns Hopkins study in the context of interest in the economic impact of the third sector.

For purposes of theoretical analysis, typical not-for-profit organisations have in Germany been conceived as multifaceted organisations that are usually characterised by five constitutional variables: interest representation, autonomy, free membership, voluntary engagement and democracy (Horch, 1992, p. 3). This classificatory approach was not far from the one of the Johns Hopkins study, stating that organizations belonging to the non-profit sector are "formally structured, organizationally independent from the state and not profit-oriented, provided that they are managed autonomously as well as financed to a certain degree by voluntary contributions, with membership not being compulsive" (Anheier *et al.*, 1998, p. 15; translation by the authors).

Both definitions are based on a typological delimitation of not-for-profit organisations from the market and the state. Yet empirically, non-profit organizations do not exist as a pure type. They likewise adhere to the logics of market, state-hierarchy and civil society, and therefore they can be seen as intermediaries (cf. Evers 1993). The "hybrid" structure of these non-profit organizations makes it possible for them to render different services to their members, the state and the market at the same time. As agencies with "multiple identities" they are at once membership, interest and service organizations.

However, this intermediary character leads to conflicts of identity concerning the inner structure of these organizations as well as the relations with the outside. In Germany, the not-for-profit sector is mainly discussed in social policy terms, as an incorporated service provider of the welfare state. This is primarily due to the fact that about two thirds of the employees of these organizations are working in the domain of health and social services, with the majority

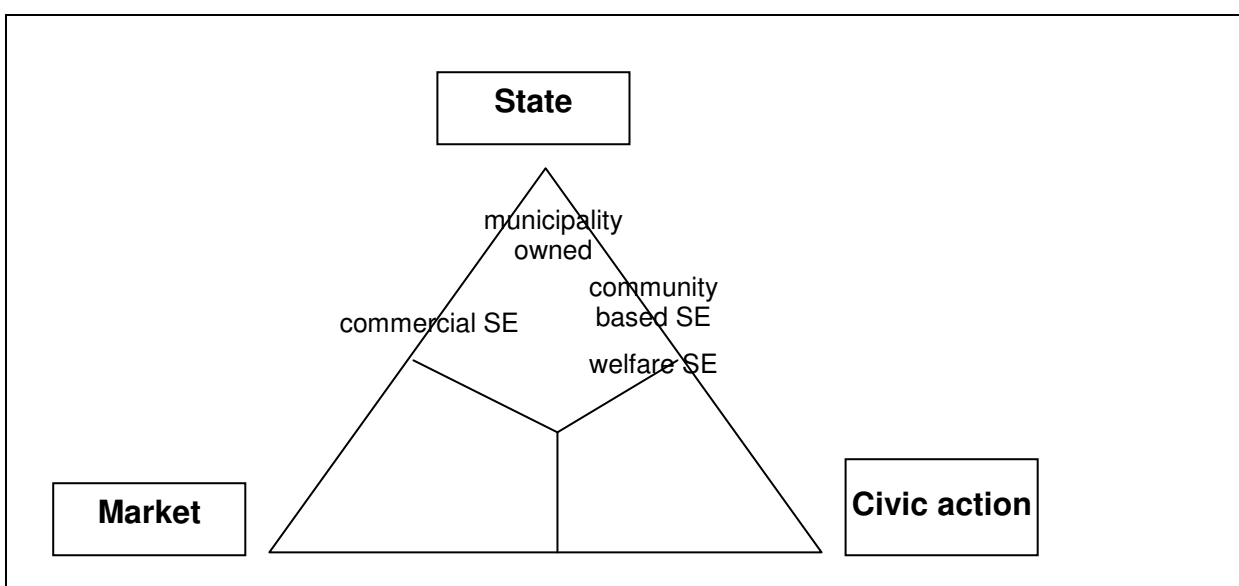
of them belonging to the great welfare associations. Besides that, there also exists a culture of local initiatives, made up of small groups, which has emerged from the new social movements and which has been partially integrated by the "Paritätische Wohlfahrtsverband", one of the six big welfare organizations in Germany. One should not underestimate the importance of these newer initiatives as they go their own way in reacting to labour market and socio-political problems.

Summing up, one can say that while the interest in the not-for-profit sector has been growing for a couple of years, the label "social enterprise" is quite unknown in Germany. The idea of social enterprises and more specifically of WISEs exists, but merely in the minds of some actors of labour market policy and of social research. As far as the management and the clientele of WISEs are concerned, these organisations, engaged in tasks of labour market integration have not yet developed an identity of their own. When it comes to classifying associations and organizations concerned with publicly financed labour market integration in Germany they get mostly perceived by their role as socio-political actors or service providers and not in the context of a debate on the special role of third sector organisations.

3. Different types of work integration social enterprises in Germany

The objective of this section is to specify which organisations active in the field of work integration and close to the concept of social enterprise as it has been developed at the European level by the EMES group can be found in Germany. We will briefly present the landscape of social enterprises and more specifically of WISEs by referring to different criteria and paying special attention to their objectives, their services and the resources they use. Figure 1 gives an understanding of the ways in which social enterprises in the field under consideration – labour market policy - might be conceptually differentiated. In that field, social enterprises as WISEs can be classified as follows.

Figure 1: Different types of social enterprises in Germany, according to their relations with the state, the market and civil society



Since the middle of the seventies, an increasing number of *municipally owned corporations* for employment and training has emerged. These enterprises make use of the various funds

available for financing time limited employment and training measures, as they have been described above. The corporations received a semiautonomous status and were detached from the municipal administration in order to be better prepared for implementing local public policies in a flexible way. Prevailing aims were to reduce the municipal budget of social assistance, to find additional financial resources and to legitimise a range of new activities apart from traditional municipal tasks (Werner, Walwei, 1997, Helbig, 2001, p. 92). Nonetheless, WISE of this kind remained closely connected to municipal policy.

Local activities for social and occupational integration were also initiated by local units of the above-mentioned welfare associations. *WISEs organized by welfare organizations* mostly stick to traditional (corporatist) arrangements with public authorities. Many officials think in terms of a welfare bureaucracy executing public policies in a quite mechanical manner. This is changing, however, with the introduction of new management methods and under the pressure of a less co-operative (local) welfare state (Bode, 1999).

Furthermore, independent *local initiatives* and associations have been founded during the last two decades. When starting their activities, these initiatives had some concern for issues of labour market integration, but they were mostly oriented towards other problems and purposes. Many of them focus on special social problems and try to match volunteering, paid work and service innovations. In order to achieve their aims, however, they began to make use of programmes set up by labour market policies.

There is a further kind of organizations concerned with work integration. In lexical terms, these organizations are the ones which come closest to the concept of social enterprises since they are called "social firms" (*Sozialbetriebe*). But these organisations belong to the field of "regular business"; their social purpose is confined to the fact that disadvantaged groups are integrated in a market venture. In some federal states, labor market programmes support these enterprises as start-ups. In the course of time, public subsidies are reduced in order to give an incentive for a self-transformation into an ordinary private firm. In Germany, such enterprises hardly appear as not-for-profit organisations. Rather, they are considered as an unconventional type of start-up business which takes into account problems of employability.

To complete our overview, we should mention that a great number of sheltered workshops exist in Germany; they give work to the disabled. There are different forms of workshops: those in which disabled people are just carrying out some craft work to improve their overall intellectual and practical capacities, and those which are busy on real product markets. Usually, they have a not-for-profit status and receive some public subsidies. We do not deal with these enterprises in the remainder of this paper since WISEs have been defined by the EMES project as organizations that are concerned with promoting people that belong to the ordinary workforce.

Table 2 presents a synoptic overview, distinguishing four types of organizations we would conceive as belonging to the field of WISEs.

Table 2: A typology of social enterprises in Germany

	Social Firm	Municipally owned SE	SE run by welfare associations	SE run by local initiatives
Legal Form	Corporation	Private limited (liability) company, association	Association (sub-unit)	Association
Primarily Goal	Start-up for disadvantaged workers	Reduction of long-term unemployment and social assistance	Reduction of poverty caused by long-term unemployment	Reduction of unemployment (as by-product)
Secondary Goals	Competitiveness	Fostering the commonweal	Social empowerment; additional work force for social services	Particular social aims
Type of job	Permanent, but not for the very marginalized	Temporary	Temporary	Temporary (sometimes permanent)
Importance of training	Training	Specific qualification; training	Specific qualification: training	Training
Type of workers	Low-skilled long-term unemployed people	Long-term unemployed among the local residents	Low-skilled and poor long-term unemployed people with multiple social problems	Unemployed people
Market / public resources	Decreasing public subsidy (by the county)	Municipal subsidy; Federal Labour Office; others	Mixed subsidy (municipality, Federal Labour Office, county, church, others)	Mixed subsidy (municipality, Federal Labour Office, county, others)
General Control	County	Municipality	(Local) overhead association	
Voluntary resources	Low	Low	Networking; some donations; some civic engagement	Networking; some donations; civic engagement

Summary:

- There is an enormous variety of actors and support institutions in the field under consideration. It hardly seems possible to arrange the involved organizations according to clear-cut borders between a public, a market and a third, not-for-profit sector. However there are clear differences between WISEs that are run for commercial aims, municipality-owned WISEs or WISEs set up by welfare associations.
- Many WISEs pursue a clearly delimited, dominant goal. Social firms strive for competitiveness and try to rapidly qualify their disadvantaged workforce in order to enhance their productivity; social enterprises founded by local initiatives and municipality-owned integration enterprises aim mostly at bridging periods of long-term unemployment. In addition to this, however, all organizations pursue further objectives which have a considerable impact on their respective approaches. Social firms try to become ordinary businesses based on market skills; municipality-owned enterprises are eager to reduce the municipal expenditure on social assistance; the social enterprises run by welfare associations usually find social aims to be more important than a mere integration into the labour market. Note that given this multiple goal structure, it seems quite difficult to quantify organizational success and unfair to judge these organisations only on behalf of their efficiency as employers.

4. The specific traits of WISE with respect to the EMES criteria

Taking as a starting point the explanations given so far, the special traits of German WISEs can be set into relation with the classification concept the EMES group has developed to characterize an ideal type of social enterprise.

Table 3 makes reference to two issues simultaneously. On the one hand it informs about the structure of the different categories of WISEs in Germany according to the EMES classification criteria. On the other hand it makes reference to the theoretical concept as it has been developed by the EMES network, understanding not-for-profit and social enterprises in general and WISEs more specifically as hybrid organisations, defined by their way of mixing and balancing elements that come from the side of the market sector, the state/public sector and the civil society.

Table 3: German WISEs and the EMES criteria

	Social firm	Municipally owned SE	SE run by welfare associations	SE run by local initiatives
Producing goods and/or selling service	Market goods or services	Services for the public good	Social services	Services for the public good or "club products"
Degree of autonomy	Increasing	Partial; autonomous board of directors	Depending on the share of non-public resources	Depending on the share of non-public resources
Level of economic risk	High	Medium	Medium	High
Amount of paid work	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Decision-making power	Board of managers	Board of managers and local authorities	Voluntary board (managers and members)	Voluntary board (activists and members)
Participatory nature	Low	Low	Medium	High
Importance of the principle of limited profit distribution	Decreasing	High	High (forbidden by law)	High (forbidden by law)
Explicit aim to benefit the community	No (economic aim)	In part (training and employment of the jobless; public works)	Yes (social empowerment)	Yes (commonweal activities, social empowerment)
Initiative launched by a group of citizens	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

5. Challenges and key questions

5.1. Challenges and key questions about objectives and benefits

Social enterprises are supposed to produce individual and collective benefits. Individual benefits are characterised by the divisibility in their consumption, even though they can have a positive collective impact. Conversely, the utility of collective benefits is indivisible. For each type of benefits one can differentiate objective and subjective patterns. Objective benefits can mostly be described and measured by indicators based on generalized standards and assumptions. Subjective benefits depend on the preferences of an individual and / or a group that may attach value to an issue that is different from the way it is measured in objective terms. While e.g. the participation in decision-making granted to its workers by a WISE may be limited in objective terms, it may be felt as strong and central by the participants.

Benefits	Individual	Collective
Objective	Monetary improvement, improvement of living and social situation, training, democratic participation	Tax and insurance fiscal benefits, providing social services, improvement of environment
Subjective	Individual well-being or satisfaction / motivation, social esteem	Social capital, public welfare

Note that an integrated approach tying together resources from different social services and policies (set in motion by a WISE) might also be successful in producing plural benefits, thus "activating" long-term unemployed persons better than in the case of a single goal structure. In the following paragraphs, we consider these benefits in more detail.

Individual benefits

Objective individual effects are in the first place monetary effects, like

- a higher income due to the participation in a public policy programme, as compared to transfers of the unemployment insurance;
- the "transfer" of recipients of social assistance to unemployment insurance (the system of the Federal Labour Office);
- a successful placement into the first labour market.

Further effects related to the better financial situation are the improvement of the living conditions, the possibility of participation in the social life and more democratic participation of the worker.

Subjective individual benefits will depend on the worker's former experiences with labour market measures, his cultural background, family situation and expectations. Therefore, it is difficult to quantify these benefits. It should however be noted how important individual subjective satisfaction is as it may be brought about by experiencing the feeling of being respected by ones' colleagues.

Collective benefits

Monetary individual effects (i.e. effects to be grasped at the level of an individual or a single organization) often go along with economic advantages for the municipalities and the public authorities at large. The municipalities already profit when participants in WISEs, who were formerly paid out of local assistance funds, have once again the right to get benefits from the unemployment insurance after the termination of their programme. Public authorities and society as a whole benefit to the degree that the activities of WISE result in a reintegration of the participants into the ordinary labour market; that does not only reduce social insurance costs but it also creates additional tax and social insurance income. It is assumed that about 30% of the participants are placed into the first labour market subsequent to a measure of active labour market policy. However, municipalities have to raise considerable investments and resources in order to bring a jobless person back into the first labour market. Therefore municipalities try to get clear figures concerning the balance of savings and investments and running costs for WISEs which are under their control or co-financed by them.

Further collective benefits are produced to the extent that WISEs deliver new services with a public utility or invest in activities related to the environment or to the social infrastructure. As mentioned above, German WISE are usually pushed to run projects for the public good. With regard to tax issues, being of public utility is an attribute and a special legal status that has to be acknowledged by public authorities (usually the tax administration). For the respective organization it entails a lower tax charge, as well as an incentive for donors since the latter are allowed to deduct their donations from their taxable income. The criterion of "public utility" is usually met if the goals of a given project have some link with aims of improving the social situation of the community. Obviously, the public welfare effect of activities, products and services of a WISE is difficult to assess. On the one hand, this is due to the difficulties of drawing a line between individual and societal concerns. On the other hand, not all dimensions of positive externalities can be measured and quantified.

WISEs being part of organized civil society (movement organizations, welfare associations), they are also prone to have a positive general impact on democracy, since they contribute to political stability and to a stronger integration of the citizens. They may open up a space of civic action for people with heavy social problems, interrelating social, educational and professional aspects in a process of secondary socialization. In that way, social enterprises can form a pre-political space, similar to other not-for-profit organizations, civic associations or social clubs. Within a movement context, they may even provide an opportunity for connecting individual problems with problems of society, be it on the local or on the national level. For instance, some not-for-profit organisations in Germany simultaneously act as an interest group for the jobless and as social enterprises offering fixed-term employment or training to unemployed people (cf. Bode 1999). A further hint to the democratic potential of social enterprises in Germany is given by the fact that they bring together different social partners (e.g. employer organizations, trade unions, business chambers, churches). This may enhance consensus building and reduce potential social conflicts and their costs.

Many German WISEs use – and likewise cultivate – social capital:

- by building up voluntary support;
- by striving for fund raising and donations;
- by establishing social links between different sectors (including public authorities) - multi-stakeholder directories can be very supportive with respect to that;
- by supporting trust, proximity and confidence in their inner structure as well as in their relations to their social and political environment;
- by interweaving the development of supply and demand when building up new goods and services together with the potential customers as "co-producers" (Evers *et al.*, 1999, p. 44).

To sum up, social enterprises stand out due to a tight integration of social capital. Networking and an activation of civic engagement, as well as the mobilization of sponsorship, have been important resources for a large number of employment projects. The German case shows that there are several dimensions of social capital building by WISEs.

At the horizontal local / regional level, social enterprises can for example network representatives of the local economy, of the churches, of associations, of public administrations as well as individuals driven by civic concerns. In a vertical direction, WISE that are members of wider umbrella organizations like the welfare associations can make use of these bonds for obtaining informational and material resources. Moreover, the training and employment curricula of WISEs are often not limited to in-house projects but also include periods in which the participants work in other organizations, such as, for example, advanced

vocational training in the local economy. Thus the democratic benefit of WISEs also refers to their ability to give access to economic partners.

When reflecting on collective benefits, one might also think in a quality dimension and evoke innovations set up by WISEs. As already stated, in Germany, publicly financed projects making use of long-term unemployed persons are promoted only on condition that they respect the criterion of being additional to already existing types of paid work, products and services, and only if they can prove their public utility. An employment project is said to be "additional" if the service at stake is rendered neither by the state nor by the market. So far, this rule has been restricting the scope of activities of WISEs, pushing them quite often into niches in which social and ecological concerns are at stake. In practice, WISEs are also involved in activities such as cultivating waste lands (e.g. those formerly used by old industries). This is a service field rarely leading to the re-integration of a jobless person into the regular labour market. Moreover, projects delivering services such as bike repair or second-hand trade have been proliferating in the whole country. In both cases, we deal with work of low productivity, and one may doubt if this enhances the chance of a jobless to join an ordinary (private) enterprise.

The overall regulation of the field requires a lot of imagination by WISEs; indeed, many of them prove to be quite creative in setting up projects that are not too far away from regular labour markets but obey to the rule of not interfering with existing businesses. This leads them to explore and test innovative services or products. It is by such activities that a WISE which is sensitive to the concerns of its disadvantaged clientele is able to stick to its multi-goal identity and to produce a broad range of collective benefits.

Summing up, one can say that the essential collective benefit produced by WISEs is their long-term or "sustainable" contribution to the reduction of the number of disadvantaged unemployed persons. A further collective impact is given by the fact that WISEs are delivering special products and services, besides their goal to provide for social and occupational integration. This said, it seems easy to make a difference between two extremes. On the one hand, a WISE may be busy in improving the infrastructure of a neighbourhood or in selling special equipments or services to private business. On the other hand, a social enterprise may produce goods or services favouring a special social or ethnic group. Whether the latter is a concern of public interest might always be contestable.

Preliminary summary:

German WISEs are prone to produce individual and collective benefits as follows:

- There is a range of objective individual effects; some of them are monetary in nature, among them the higher income obtained by participating in a programme. A further effect of this kind consists of a quicker transfer of the welfare recipient into the first labour market.
- There are subjective individual benefits as well, concerning psycho-social stabilization and / or chances to build up social competences. In addition to this, the clientele of WISEs benefit from an integrated approach linking different kinds of support; thereby long-term unemployed persons might feel better supported than by a mere placement strategy.
- Collective effects that can be objectivated and measured quite easily comprise (1) the reduction of the number of recipients of unemployment insurance benefits and of social assistance; (2) goods and services produced by a WISE, linked to a mission for the public good; (3) the overall improvement of the educational level in society by

training measures; (4) increased income tax revenues and contributions to social insurances. Note, however, that the support given to WISE also implies a high financial burden on public budgets in the short run. Positive monetary effects will therefore stay within limits.

- Further collective effects of WISEs that will be a matter of different subjective judgements are (1) democratic integration by creating networks of various local and supra-regional actors, including those which are crucial for an innovative local (welfare) economy; (2) the introduction of new political standards in the public sphere, by the fact that WISE are implementation partners on the local labour market and also engage in lobbying and giving expertise to larger systems of negotiation and bargaining.

5.2. Challenges and key questions about the resource mix of WISEs

The way labour market policy measures are implemented by WISEs depends on their own resources and their entitlement to different forms of financial support. In particular, the accomplishment of the potential collective benefits, and especially of the public-welfare-oriented goals, is contingent upon WISEs' continuing access to resources. Therefore, a relatively stable arrangement of financial support constitutes a fundamental prerequisite for policy success. In Germany, the following sources are generally used by WISEs (it should however be noted that the impact of the different resources varies according to the type of WISE):

- advantages relating to tax policy due to the "public benefit" label (grants);
- funding by labour-market-related (state based, insurance based) and social assistance based programmes (as far as state-based resources are concerned, one has to differentiate between the municipal, central, federal and EU level).

Furthermore, WISEs can use the following resources:

- income realised through the delivery of goods and services and through contracts with public and private partners (including advantageous loans and credits);
- social capital in various forms: donations, volunteer work, support by networks and partnerships.

Usually the financing that stems from programmes on the different levels of public authorities is by far the most important material resource; and a large part of this financing has a strong steering effect since it is associated with clear rules and prescriptions.

Consequently, the crucial point refers to the question as to how these resources can be used in correspondence with the organization's goals. In this paper, we would just like to give some indications for further reflection on the topic. Finding resources might (and actually does in many cases) entail:

- an orientation towards fiscal actors with aims similar to those of WISEs (e.g. other institutions that support employment, such as the municipalities which try to reduce the number of their long-time unemployed persons and welfare recipients by means of different projects);
- a purposeful combination of different sources of support (so-called finance mix) in order to reduce one-sided financial dependencies and the respective risks;
- the combination of cash benefits and benefits in kind as well as the use of synergies from co-operation with other actors in setting up projects and new services;
- the use of employee shares for projects that are achievable in the short term and that provide a visible benefit for the employees themselves;

- a more targeted co-operation with local businesses that sponsor services in the context of common projects (corporate sponsoring);
- the set-up of so-called community foundations that bundle public subsidies for specific projects.

So there are some possibilities to make use of resources that are not public and not directly monetarised. Social capital-related resources are a part of this potential of strategic options, and the way as well as the degree to which they are used obviously differs from one case to another. At this point it is helpful to distinguish between partnership-oriented and support-oriented social capital. Larger social enterprises rather use partnership-oriented social capital in the context of long-term, stable and formalized co-operation with a clear balance of give and take; smaller social enterprises are more often based on non-reciprocal, support-oriented social capital. A clear quantification of social capital as a production factor is not possible; in the publicly financed projects of WISEs it has foremost a symbolic and integrative role.

5.3. Challenges and key questions about isomorphism and different paths of institutionalisation

From our point of view, three factors are of special importance for the further development of WISEs in Germany:

- the direction taken by reforms in labour market policies and in the patterns of services delivered by the labour market offices; it has already been noted that instruments of preventive labour market policy are currently being strengthened while the amount of funds devoted to employment projects is decreasing. The main emphasis is on the reduction of frictional unemployment and on the respective instruments, like placement, with an increased use of instruments such as profiling and case management. Both employment measures that simply help people to take part in some kind of work and more complex developmental projects that aim at linking employment and the creation of new products and services tend to become marginal. Hence, with regard to the latter case, those WISEs that pursue multiple goals hardly get stimulated under the current federal labour market regulations. Rather, there are strong incentives to become a subcontractor, selecting those single goals (like training, placement etc.) that presently pay off best;
- WISEs share to some degree the general pressure on not-for-profit organizations, which has increased alongside with the financial crisis of public authorities as the main funding bodies. In reaction to this, WISEs and associations started to look for internal saving potentials. They partly rationalized by cutting off those activities, in terms of long-term resources or special services, by which they distinguished themselves from other organizations in the field of labour market policy, e.g. taking part in public debates and opinion forming, developing better socio-pedagogical guidance etc. Furthermore, a stronger impact of managerial logics and quantifiable success indicators which partly incites to use creaming techniques when selecting employees points to the same direction
- changes in the social context may add to this. Especially among the weaker groups, individualization goes along with a loss of old forms of moral guidance, community ties and family norms. For these social bonds, substitutes favouring an individual social competence for building "active trust" or for coping with "seductions of freedom" are hardly available. In the contemporary German work society, new abilities and skills (e.g. capacities of social networking) are required for finding one's way through individualized labour markets. The possibilities to handle these new

challenges are distributed quite unequally among social strata. For currently existing "problem groups" difficulties may grow, and in face of these challenges new problem groups may appear. Social enterprises, and more specifically WISEs, are directly confronted with these issues since they are dealing, for example, with participants such as single parents and people with multiple problems. Their everyday work is heavily interrelated with issues concerning the management of family relations, habitudes of income consumption, and psychosocial problems (Kieselbach *et al.*, 1997). To be effective on these fronts requires organizational designs capable of building networks of co-operation and combining different resources, instead of increasingly becoming the segmented specialists current politics in Germany are calling for.

6. Comparative performance and specificity of work integration social enterprises, as compared to for-profit enterprises and public organizations

Rather than concentrating on WISEs as possible promoters of new products and services, we focus on their impact on the "integration course" that is experienced by the long-term unemployed – a group that constitutes an increasing part on the jobless in Germany. It has been argued that WISEs produce individual and collective benefits especially for this group, provided that they perform as multi-goal organizations. Why do other types of organizations that are clearly state- or market-based have difficulties to act in the same way as WISEs? As it has already been shown, the effects and benefits of WISEs are not only limited to mere occupational integration. There are also effects like regional policy involvement, democratic education, social participation, and the production of public goods. Moreover, WISEs can act as interest groups or as an agency of social work. These effects are based on a multi-resource- and multiple-goal structure.

It is far from clear, however, to what extent existing WISEs perform in that way empirically. It is true that some of the changes depicted in the precedent overview point into the direction of isomorphism with single-goals organizations driven by mere bureaucratic or, more importantly, by a short-term market logic. Still, many WISEs act as multiple-goal organizations in Germany. Yet, current reforms in the policy field are eager to change the rules of the game and it is questionable whether a majority of WISEs will maintain their broad integration role under these conditions.

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