



**JOBTOWN is a European Network of Local Partnerships for the Advancement of Youth Employment and Opportunity, drawn from 11 localities across Europe.**



This is the second newsletter of JobTown, an URBACT network of 11 European localities concerned with **what local administrations can do to support youth employment and opportunity.**

JobTown enjoyed a contents rich second Transnational Workshop, in Kaiserslautern Germany on an issue pretty fundamental to the long-term employment prospects of young people – ‘Making Education and Training More Responsive to the Labour Market’. Later this month, we are holding our third Workshop in Rennes, France, on the complementary subject of ‘Analysing and Forecasting Local Labour Market Demand’; if an administration wants to be more responsive to its specific local or regional labour market, it has to understand it first.

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## JobTown News:

**1) Our second Transnational Workshop was held in Kaiserslautern (Germany) in October 2013 – dedicated to the theme ‘Making Education and Vocational Education and Training Responsive to the Needs of the Labour Market’.**

The Workshop was chaired by the town’s URBACT Local Support Group coordinator, Michael Lill, held on the University of Kaiserslautern campus, and kicked off with a welcome by the Mayor, Dr. Susanne Wimmer- Leonhardt. Participants included various elected officials from JobTown localities, Structural Fund Managing Authority representatives, and a range of professionals from the educational field: school directors, principals, education policy officers, and so forth.

### Main contents of the Kaiserslautern workshop:

– An in-depth look, aimed at practitioners and policy specialists, at **German vocational education and training practices**; in particular at how apprenticeships and the ‘Dual System’ work in practice in Germany.



*All the JobTown partners during the Kaiserslautern meeting*

This was supported by representatives from the **Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training** (perhaps more known by its German acronym BIBB), and the **Chamber of Skilled Crafts** (ZDH), who also organised a visit to see first hand how such policy and theory is applied in a local Vocational school.

– Regional **labour market** dynamics (the area contains a mix of specificities and issues common throughout Europe) and an overview of the locality's long-term story of **regeneration**, from a 'rust belt' type centre for old and dying industry to a dynamic and competitive pole for IT and high skilled value added activity.

This experience of one town's struggle with the challenges of regeneration and change management speaks to the challenges local and regional administrations are coping with across the EU.

- The **OECD LEED** programme presented an overview of 'Effective Approaches to Adapting Education to Labour Market Needs' from around the globe. We saw which approaches were working and why.
- Education and training provision from an **employer's perspective**: the need for an adequate skills supply base to stay competitive and grow, issues and options for upskilling employees, taking on apprentices and so forth. This view was illustrated by the UK example of the **Port of Tilbury** and its own, largely partnership-based, training policies and programmes
- Better **joining up and coordinating** the range of social and employment related services and support that are provided for young people. This included a look at a local practice of putting such services all 'under one roof' and strongly coordinating them.
- The role of **civil society** partners, volunteers and associations – as showcased by a local programme whereby professionals from various fields take on mentoring responsibilities in support of young people entering the labour market.

A JobTown toolkit on 'Making Education and Vocational Education and Training Responsive to the Needs of the Labour Market' – consisting of a video and a set of written documents has been produced and a JobTown publication on this topic is forthcoming.

All this and more JobTown outputs available at: <http://urbact.eu/en/projects/active-inclusion/jobtown/our-outputs/>

**2) The Centre for European Studies** in Brussels organised in December a 'Winter School' on 'New Skills and Occupations in Europe: Challenges and Possibilities', which the JobTown Lead Expert participated in. Ian's Blog post summarising the main points, as relevant to JobTown's issues, is available here:

<http://www.blog.urbact.eu/2014/01/what-i-learnt-at-winter-school-about-skills-and-jobs-in-europe/>

or

<http://projectworks.wordpress.com/blog-posts/what-i-learnt-at-winter-school-about-skills-and-jobs-in-europe/>

**3) Prevent**, a sister URBACT network concerned with early school leaving, will be participating in our next Workshop (see upcoming events), with a view to capitalising on each other's work and thus increasing the effectiveness of URBACT participation.

**4) Functional Economic Area** video series case study has been released.

A Functional Economic Area (FEA) is an organisation of territory as defined by *de facto* usages and flows – transport, labour market practices, living/working patterns, commerce etc. – rather than by traditional territorial units like counties, provinces, departments and so forth.

As a practice, FEAs are interesting, because they offer a response to a common problem, whereby local or regional realities are not adequately reflected by any existing territorial governance structure or institution.

Working in terms of real Functional Economic Areas is practical; it can make development strategies and support for jobs and growth more effective. In particular, the practice has significant potential implications for how the **European Regional Development Fund** is implemented and thought about.

**Enfield**, a member of the JobTown URBACT network, has made working within its FEA – the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor – a key part of its own long-term regeneration strategy. This experience has stimulated a lot of interest within the network, and was first presented to the larger public in the first JobTown Thematic Publication.

Following that publication, JobTown's Lead Expert chose to look at the practice in greater depth, producing this case study in the form of a series of short videos, each dealing with different aspects of a Functional Economic Area.

Available here:

<http://urbact.eu/en/projects/active-inclusion/jobtown/our-outputs/>

## JOB TOWN PARTNER NEWS

### Avilés (Spain)

#### **Youth Participation and Public Consultation Best Practice**

Avilés has elaborated a first draft of a diagnosis of its youth employment situation and formed five **large groups of young people** who will contribute to the Action Plan building on the diagnosis.

A work seminar was held November 19<sup>th</sup> 2013, to which over thirty youth-related organisations (universities, companies, associations, etc.) active in the area were invited – to agree on the conclusions of the diagnosis and to collect their input and suggestions.

From these contributions, a final version of the study was drafted, and released by the Mayor of Avilés and members of the ULSG at a December 13<sup>th</sup> 2013 event.

Avilés plans to continue with this consultative process in developing each component of their Local Action Plan.

Diagnostic document (in Spanish):

<http://www.aviles.es/AytoAvilesPortal/portal/cn/NavSec/Documento?ITEM=c373e91154fb59f95706001279d2e011>

Press article (in Spanish):

<http://www.elcomercio.es/20131213/asturias/aviles/paro-juvenil-201312131756.html>

### Cesena (Italy)

**Our Lead Partner has approved their "Pacchetto lavoro"** – a "package" of actions and measures for 2014, to combat the current difficulties of the local labour market. This is the first step in **implementing their Local Action Plan**. The actions were developed through stakeholder consultation around tables grouped by theme.

**Cesena launches 'Impresa Creativa'** – an entrepreneurship contest for young people. Contestants propose business ideas and a commission evaluates them. The top 10 win a place in a 3-month workshop for developing their business plans. Even better, the top 3 get seed money, a place in the local incubator and some business related services.

# UPCOMING JOBTOWN EVENTS

JobTown **Transnational Workshop #3, 'Local Functional Labour Market Analysis and Forecasting'** Partners will work on developing or improving the identification and forecasting of needed skills and competences, stemming from developments in the labour market and the resultant shifts in demand for skills and worker profile. These contents are the flipside of 2nd Workshop on adapting education and training to labour market needs; here we are looking at how those needs can be known and understood, in the context of very specific local regional labour markets, not aggregated national data.

**Date:** 19-20 February 2014

**Location:** Rennes, France

## JOBTOWN EU NEWS

*Gathered by JOBTOWN Lead Expert*

1) **The TARDIS project** has produced a computer game/platform that simulates job interviews. It's designed to be especially useful for inclusion groups. Learn more:

<http://www.tardis-project.eu/>

2) **EU Cohesion Policy has been reformed**, with a view to maximising its impact on growth and jobs. Funds are to be more effectively targeted, new conditionalities introduced, cooperation and more integrated strategies facilitated, accountability increased and so forth.

Info (dated Nov. 2013) available here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/newsroom/detail.cfm?LAN=en&id=1057&lang=en](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/newsroom/detail.cfm?LAN=en&id=1057&lang=en)

3) The European Council has adopted **Erasmus +** with a budget of 14.7 billions Euros for the period 2014-2020. 10% of this budget (1.47 billion) is reserved for the chapter Youth in action. This represents an increase of 66% of the European budget for non formal learning mobilities of young people and youth workers, networking and partnerships between actors in the youth field, and support to youth policies in Europe and capacity building in partners countries. See:

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-13-1087\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-1087_en.htm)

4) **Education and economic growth – the two sides of the same coin**, November 2013 conference, very interesting summary of contents:

<http://fnf-europe.org/2013/11/26/education-and-economic-growth-the-two-sides-of-the-same-coin/>

5) **Intereconomics**, a respected review on European economic policy, alerted us to the research, case studies and recommendations regarding youth unemployment they have published. Quality stuff, available here:

<http://intereconomics.eu/archive/year/2013/4/865/>

# JobTown interview with Michael Lill

## – Coordinator of the URBACT Local Support Group for Kaiserslautern, Germany

Kaiserslautern – represented through its university – is JobTown’s partner in Germany and the host of our second Transnational Workshop in October 2013. The Workshop focused on approaches to making education and training more responsive to the labour market, and was chaired by the coordinator of the Local Support Group himself, Michael Lill, also manager of the consultancy firm IHK Zetis GmbH – Centre for Technology and Innovation Consulting Southwest (<http://www.zetis.de/>).

I’ve interviewed him to learn more about the situation in his patch of Europe, and to share any insight he might have, based on his experience coordinating an URBACT Local Support Group, which so far seems to be running along pretty well.



Michael Lill, ULSG Coordinator

### – What do you hope to get out of the JobTown experience?

We have our problems in Kaiserslautern, and we can always learn from other experiences. We’ve got a lot out of other EU projects.

For my part, I’d like to see us develop a much **better understanding** of this complex topic – youth employment policy. There are so many stakeholders involved, so many projects and activities, but there’s not enough **coordination** and strategic planning.

I hope we can do much better work as economic developers. I want youth unemployment close to **zero**.

### – Do you think that’s possible?

Yes. Reducing the unemployment rate as much as we can must be the aim.

### – What’s the employment situation like in your city and how does it compare to the national situation?

#### Average for Germany

Employment rates in Kaiserslautern are **average** or near average, with general unemployment rates of 9-10%, matching the national average. Youth unemployment is 8% versus a national average of 7%, so a bit higher, but not by much.

We have many jobs with high skill qualification profiles, because of the university, the research institute, the tech sector and so on.

On the other hand, we have problems in sectors like health, hotels and restaurants. The problem is there are jobs offered there, but we have not enough people able to do them.

### – So the supply gaps are mostly in service sector jobs?

Yes.

#### Service Sector Gaps

### – Aren’t demographics a big concern for Germany?

Yes, the German economy is doing ok for now, but in a few years intense demographic problems are going to hit us. We have to get ready to face that future.

#### Demographic problems → immigration

### – This brings us to immigration.

We will need **openness** in all our companies, to skilled people from other European countries – otherwise, we’re going to have a big problem. We will need people who are academically qualified, but also people with trade skills and so on – middle and high skilled.

– **We’ve talked about the Urbact project OpenCities , which I was part of – are you confident in your city’s ability to accept new people coming in?**

**Need Them**

Perhaps the city could look at starting integration projects, to raise openness.

Though, I’d say we already have a good openness. We have lots of American people living here, lots of Portuguese... we’re **used to getting along** with different people.

Admittedly, it’s true, integrating different cultures and religions can be a challenge. For example some Muslim people have had a hard time integrating in our local culture. Not the Turks though, we’re pretty familiar with each other.

The politics can get complicated. Some people think immigrants are a burden, that they come here and cost us money – but that just isn’t the case. We **need them**.

We need to integrate people into our German society, we don’t need ghettos.

**Language** is key to long-term integration on all levels.

However, in our IT companies, a lot of the work is done in **English** – some even run their meetings in English. I know a company where 60% of the employees are from outside Germany, from 22 different countries.

The **university** also offers courses in English, and they have students from around 170 different countries.



*Ian Goldring, JobTown Lead Expert*

Here, if you speak good English and good German, you’ll have all the opportunities anyone has.

– **Do people understand the need for immigration?**

**Differing awareness regarding immigration**

A few weeks ago, we ran a survey in our region on hiring people from other European countries and entrepreneurs turned out to not be very interested in bringing in high skilled people from other European countries. The **pressure** on them is still not high enough, to make them turn to international solutions.

This is completely different in the region of Ludwigshafen and Mannheim (*neighbouring area, where his company is also active*). There’s a different dynamic there. They are more **aware** of the need to supplement the workforce with skilled foreign people. They have **bigger companies**, with more obvious job offer and demand issues.

I think in 3 to 5 years, we’ll have the same awareness here. Thing is, change can come so fast, and that can lead to a **lag** in doing what needs to be done, in time.

– **The smaller actors have less of a long-term understanding, and the larger companies do studies and see the long-term projections more clearly?**

**Mostly small companies**

Right.

From 50,000 companies we have in our region, there are only 300 with more than 100 employees. The average company we deal with has **5-6 employees**.

– **Kaiserslautern stands out as a city that has undergone significant regeneration; how has the place changed over the last 20 years or so?**

We’ve had intensive change here. We were an old industrial region, with big factories – pretty run down (laughs). Nowadays, we are a **hi-tech** region, and our workforce has much **higher levels of education**. Around 10% of our companies’ staffs have strong academic qualifications; 20 years ago it would have been perhaps 1 or 2%.

There has been a major structural shift; it’s a completely different region now. I can see it because I grew up here. Things were outdated, now with the university and research institute, and university spin offs, we have a fresh climate – it’s more **future-oriented**.

**Structural change**

**– Has perception of the city outside Kaiserslautern kept up with the pace of change?**

There is still a lack of understanding about Kaiserslautern; it's doing very well, but the **image** is not in accordance. Many people don't know that Kaiserslautern is now a very future-oriented city. When we contacted people who were educated here maybe 20 years ago, and who now work somewhere like Munich or Stuttgart, and we told them about the latest developments, they just didn't believe it.

We invited a group of them back for a weekend, and their jaws dropped. They said 'wow, we didn't expect this'. Our problem is one of misperception. Externally there is either no image formed of us, or one we wouldn't want. Sometimes all they know about us is **soccer, not the Max Planck Institute**, etc.

**– Are you looking at city-region Marketing strategies, like Glasgow in the 90s, that sort of thing?**

**Yes!** Really professional regional Marketing is very important for the future of Kaiserslautern. Targeted Marketing will be a big part of our coming work.

*Event strategies – a one-off won't do it*

**– What about festivals and events, using them as a way to attract attention to the city and see how it has changed?**

Absolutely. We should go for new events. **Glasgow's a very good example** in this regard; they did this well. All over the country, we want people to see what has happened in Kaiserslautern, we need to bring them here. Back in 2006, Kaiserslautern was one of the host cities for the World Cup, and the world was here. We had a great atmosphere, and people saw Kaiserslautern as the friendly and attractive city it is.

You need to attract attention, but you need the **substance** to be there – something you can raise awareness about. You need to understand how companies think, follow a very professional systematic strategy, with vision and multiple steps.

You can't just pull it off with a one-weekend event; you have to keep the strategy up for years.



*The city and its surroundings*

**– Tell me about your Local Support Group and how it's coming along**

They have **known each other for many years**, but they have **never really worked together** in a very concrete focused way like they are now.

**JobTown** has been a way to get them together.

We've got people from the Chamber of Crafts, the Chamber of Commerce (which I am representing), the Development Office, and people from concerned associations (3rd sector).

Our last meeting in December 2013 was very good. Group work – what everyone does, their roles – is very **transparent**.

*New cooperation*

– **How did you proceed?**

*New understanding*

We began with a **review** of all our running projects and rated them.

We put a big list of projects and actions **on the wall**, and we saw that sometimes we had good activities, but only for a specific target group – teachers for example.

Based on that, we are identifying the gaps among what's already being done. This proved surprising, as the participants hadn't previously realised those gaps were there – **it wasn't on their radar**. Now we're looking at covering those gaps.

We're thinking both in **lateral** terms – that is, developing similar actions for other target groups – and in terms of completely **new initiatives**. I feel so far we've taken some very good steps. Now in 2014, the plan is to develop the new projects. The team is really **motivated**.

*New motivation*

– **What makes a Support Group successful?**

We have to keep them motivated. Every time we meet each other, something needs to have been achieved in the meanwhile. People need to **see some progress** being made.

**Minutes** should be well taken. The next steps, **actions** to be taken clearly stated.

We have to ask people on an individual basis – personally – about how they can contribute.

*Visible progress*

– **I'm very concerned with avoiding tokenism. How do you think young people can be given a meaningful voice in this process?**

This is can be a challenge in Germany, like elsewhere. We have to bring young people together, on a regional level.

Associations can play an important role. Chambers and players in the educational field need to work with young people, involve them and raise awareness among them.

For example, the Chambers **have special consultants**, who go out and talk with both businesspeople and young people directly, to find out about their needs, their working and learning atmosphere, and so on.

Companies should also go into the schools – the future-oriented ones do.

*Work together*

– **What do you think Kaiserslautern's experience might offer to others?**

Perhaps our working very closely with the **region, the university and economic stakeholders**.

For 20 or 25 years, we weren't getting the economic spin offs we wanted from the university. So together, we started a lot of coordinated initiatives and the result was that now we have about **300 hi-tech companies** in Kaiserslautern.

The politics, the research and the economics had to **work closely together – this is the secret**.

Also, we can offer a lot of experience coping with big changes – **change management** if you will.

*Change*

– **Where's Kaiserslautern going?**

We have to continue in the direction we've taken, but **expand** it; we need to extend cooperation to the other cities and regions around us.

Over the next 10 years, we have a chance to become the most attractive city in the southwest of Germany – because, on one hand, we can grow a very strong hi-tech environment and, on the other hand, we can offer quality of life, in a nice city with lots to offer and beautiful forested surroundings.

– *Interview conducted by Ian Goldring, JobTown Lead Expert*

## For more JobTown information:

Visit our website: <http://urbact.eu/en/projects/active-inclusion/jobtown/homepage/>

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