

TITLE

Employment in the open labour market for persons with Down syndrome

Turkey: Down Syndrome Association – Job Coaching Supported Employment programme

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Down Syndrome Association is a charity organization dedicated to activities designed to change the public perception of persons with Down syndrome, and to creating an equal opportunity atmosphere for people with this disability. From 2014 to 2016, the Job Coaching Supported Employment programme provided employment opportunities for 30 persons with Down syndrome.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Jobs created in 2014: 12
- Jobs created in 2015: 12
- Jobs created in 2016 (to date): 6
- All the jobs created (three part-time; others full-time) are in the open labour market.

PROBLEMS TARGETED

Societal prejudice and incomplete education force people with Down syndrome to stay at home or in institutions, leaving them without opportunities for inclusion in the open labour market.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

The programme offers persons with Down syndrome and their families a variety of training opportunities, including:

- Consultation in setting career goals
- Skills enhancement training
- Support for job matching and seeking
- Awareness and acceptance training

Typical jobs tend to be in sales, but there are also waiters and servers, one human resources assistant, an accountant assistant, and a receptionist. The Down Syndrome Association is also publishing supportive educational books; and in cooperation with the Anadolu University Special Education Department, it has begun to give individuals additional training on job coaching.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

The programme has a total annual cost of €56,000 and has obtained a Social Development Grant from the Sabanci Foundation for the years 2015 to 2017. Additional income sources stem from charity bazaars, corporate social responsibility projects, and the Down Syndrome Association's online

shop. Since 2012, the business model has been growing substantially and has encouraged a similar project from Yeditepe University in Turkey. Furthermore, the university has collaborated with the Down Syndrome Association to initiate its own pilot project on job coaching.

QUOTE

“I can memorize all the papers in a file in order, and I quickly realize whether there are any missing or not. Because of this, my colleagues call me ‘the detector’ – and I like it very much!”

— Mert Kiziltepe, programme beneficiary

CONTACT

Mr. Selver YOLSEVER

+90 532 161 72 56

selver@downturkiye.com

www.downturkiye.com

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