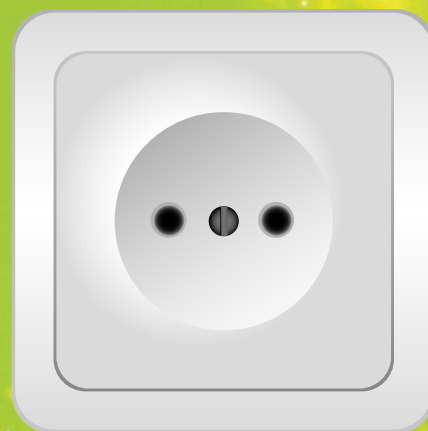
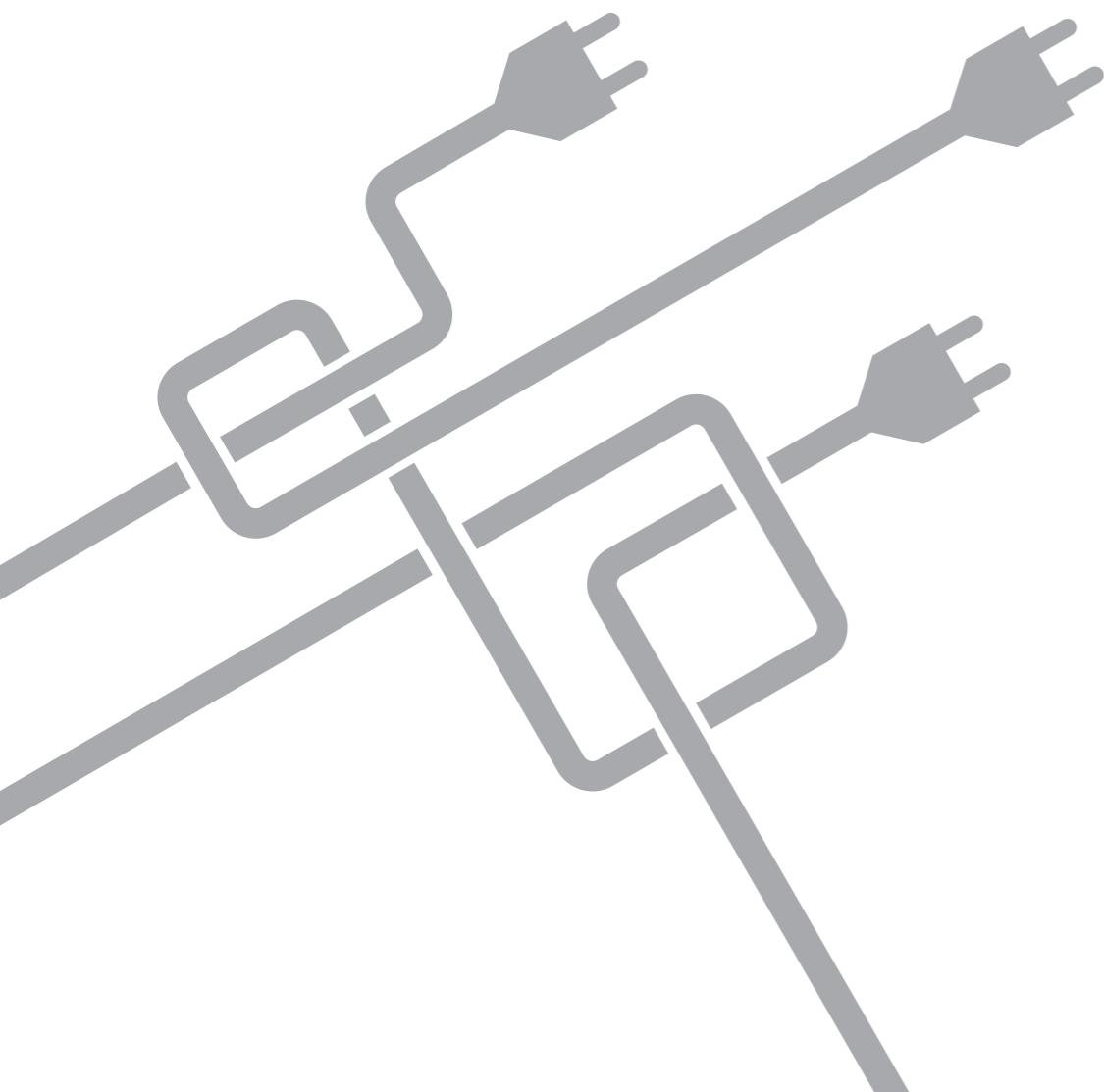


# The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs will give you energy!

## JOIN US AS WELL





## Dear readers,

We are slowly approaching the end of the programming period of the European Union for 2007–2013, and, hopefully, we can look back on what has been achieved. We have supported hundreds of projects that help both individuals and groups. The funds have been, and still are, distributed efficiently among a wide range of non-profit organizations, companies, and other organizations.

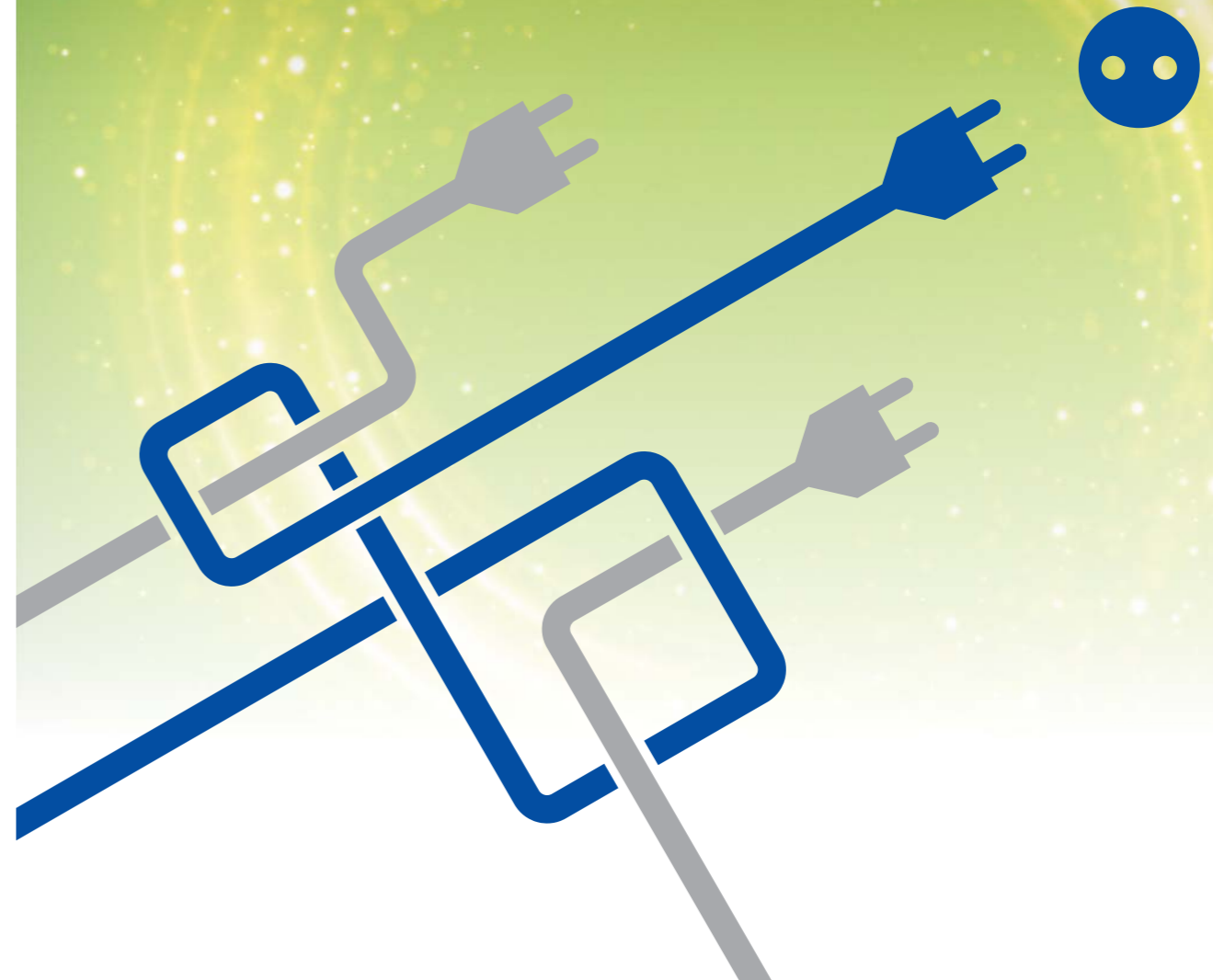
The Intermediate Body (IB), which is the EU Funds Implementation Department, part of the EU Funds Section of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), is responsible for employment services (areas of support 1.2, 2.1, and 3.3) and the area of social integration and social services (areas of support 3.1 and 3.2). Projects that we support using the European Social Fund help the unemployed to reintegrate into the work process in the open labour market, or within sheltered employment, as well as employees. They are aimed at different target groups, such as young people under 25 years old, handicapped persons, people over 50 years old, ethnic minorities, persons leaving prisons, and others. Projects that focus on social services and social integration help people find their way back into society. Other supported areas include the education of social service providers' staff and other persons, planning availability of social services, implementation of quality processes of social services provision, as well as transformation of residential facilities of social services, and creation and development of new business activities aimed at social businesses.

The publication "Stories of Good Practice" that you are holding tries to show specifically how the funds received within the Human Resources and Employment Operational Programme from the European Social Fund (ESF) help real people around us. It presents stories of people who found themselves in difficult life situations, and it was also thanks to projects supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs that the people were given a chance to change their situations. I believe that by reading them you will find proof of how public resources can assist in solving specific problems.

*PhDr. Karel Vít, Ph.D.  
Director of the EU Funds Implementation Department  
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs*

## 1.2

# Increasing the Adaptability of Employees from Restructured Enterprises



# Ludmila Bernášková

I enjoy my work more than before



**Mrs Ludmila Bernášková from Velká Bukovina in the Dečín region worked for eleven years in Česká Lípa, for a company that manufactured, among other items, automotive cables. Then, however, a disastrous change occurred.**

“The company cut costs and transferred the production to Romania, where it’s cheaper. I was dismissed,” forty-two-year-old Ludmila describes the difficult period. She had no choice but, like every other person out of work, to register with the Labour Office.

When she was still in her notice period, the staff of the Česká Lípa Labour Office contact point advised her to join the “RESTART for the Česká Lípa region” project. Ludmila didn’t hesitate, she filled in the application form – and never regretted it. Thanks to the project she found a job. Before she was able to start work, she attended a training course within the “RESTART for the Česká Lípa region” project. She had several retraining options: accounting, computer skills, or she could even learn to operate a forklift. However, Ludmila likes working with people, so she didn’t hesitate, and chose social services. That was a good decision. “The training lasted two months, and I attended it every day. During the course, I was offered a job in the Retirement Home in Česká Kamenice,” she recalls the very important day. Thanks to the retraining provided within the “RESTART for the Česká Lípa region” project, she already had professional knowledge when she started working in the Retirement Home. “They taught us how to treat people, as well as codes of ethics, and I also learned a lot of things about diseases,” she describes the daily seven-hour training course that was very helpful for her new job.

Ludmila works in the Retirement Home as a social care worker. “I’ve never imagined that I would do this kind of work,” she says, still a little surprised. She originally wanted to work with children, but helping seniors is more interesting for her than she expected. When she is on duty, her working day starts at about 6 a.m. The seniors living here get up at 7 a.m. Breakfast is followed by a varied programme. Ludmila takes care of five clients, and she meets other seniors during handicrafts, which are part of the daily programme in the Retirement Home. “I’m responsible for cleaning and hygiene, as well as for things like decorations,” she describes her work happily, adding that, thanks to the project, she enjoys her work more than before. She was only a part of the whole in her previous job, but she feels much more useful here. “I know these people need me,” she says frankly.

**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 1.2

**Project title:**  
RESTART for the Česká Lípa region

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/1.2.00/37.00005

**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Liberec, Česká Lípa Labour Office contact point

The project focused on helping people threatened by unemployment. Still in the notice period, people attended many courses, retraining programmes, and counselling consultations to be able to easily re-integrate into the labour market. Thanks to the project, unemployment in the region has not increased. A total of 307 persons (105% of the planned number) participated in the project.

# Miroslav Šplíchal

I lost my job – thanks to the project and MoLSA I have a new one



**Miroslav Šplíchal from Česká Lípa had first-hand experience of what it’s like to lose a job. The thirty-eight-year-old man was swept up in a large wave of collective redundancies after nearly eighteen years of continuous work for a company manufacturing wiring harnesses for the car industry.**

“We were hit by the global crisis, and the company started firing hundreds of people. I was one of them,” Miroslav recalls difficult moments he experienced two years ago. Economic fluctuations caused by the global economic crisis affected a number of companies in the Česká Lípa region at that time, which resulted in a dramatic reduction in a number of jobs available. Within the blue-collar sector, in which Miroslav was employed, there was almost zero chance of finding a job. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate for even a second when the Česká Lípa Labour Office contact point offered him an opportunity to join the “RESTART for the Česká Lípa region” project. It was a tailor-made project for employees in their notice period which Miroslav Šplíchal joined. “Today I’m thankful that I did it,” he says with satisfaction. “Many of my former colleagues didn’t join the RESTART project, and now when I meet them, they complain that they are still out of work. But not me.”

“I could take a computer course or a welding course. But as a welder, I wouldn’t have found a job in the Česká Lípa region, because local companies weren’t recruiting them. Computers weren’t for me either. The forklift operator course seemed the best option, so I chose that,” he describes his practical choice when deciding about his future. During the retraining course within the RESTART project, he learnt the necessary theory for machine control. The Labour Office provided him with practical training in a Česká Lípa factory operated by Fehrer Bohemia s.r.o. At the same time, Miroslav gained other important knowledge that should help him re-integrate into the labour market. “They worked with us for several hours a day, for two months,” Miroslav describes the training content. “We were taught how to treat people, and how to communicate with them to be able to present ourselves appropriately. We also studied codes of ethics, and we even dealt with financial literacy. Shortly after I completed the forklift retraining course, Fehrer had a vacant handler position, and the management chose me,” says Miroslav. Part of the RESTART project was financial contribution, lasting several months, to the salaries of people who have participated in the project, which was an advantage for employers. Miroslav is happy now: “The employer cares about us. We can use different benefits, like an in-house masseur. But most importantly, I have a job that I enjoy. I wouldn’t change it for anything else.” After almost two years in a new job, Miroslav is still glad that he joined the project. As he says, he found a job far more easily than if he had been looking for it on his own, as one of the thousands of people out of work.

**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 1.2

**Project title:**  
RESTART for the Česká Lípa region

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/1.2.00/37.00005

**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Liberec, Česká Lípa Labour Office contact point

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# Růžena Šulcová

Růžena Šulcová's story proves that the supported project really works



**Forty-six-year-old Růžena Šulcová from Nezabylice has been working for over a year in the butchery department of the Globus hypermarket, as a shop assistant at the meat and sausages counter.**

"Originally I was a dressmaker, but I wouldn't earn my living doing this now. Buying clothes is now simply much cheaper than having them made," says Mrs. Šulcová. "The retraining course helped me mentally. I wanted to attend a technical course, because I love male work. So I obtained a forklift operator certificate."

Completing a retraining course has paid off: "I didn't wait for long. In December I got a part-time job, and in March I had a contract in Globus in Chomutov for one year. This is my second year here now," says Mrs Šulcová with satisfaction.

**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 1.2

**Project title:** RESTART-Chomutov

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/1.2.00/37.00003

**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem, Chomutov Labour Office contact point

The project focused on helping employees of companies undergoing structural changes who were either at risk of losing their jobs or were in their notice period. Through educational and training activities, employees improved their knowledge and skills before the termination of their employment. It was then easier for them to find new jobs. The project has helped reduce the impact of the financial crisis on employees in the Chomutov region.

# Petra Kuncová and Jana Balogová

Petra Kuncová and Jana Balogová found employment in a new field through MoLSA

**Until recently, Petra Kuncová worked for R.B. Farquhar, s.r.o., which, however, went bankrupt. "Our former director mediated the opportunity to join the 'RESTART-Chomutov' project for me," she says. "I completed an advanced computer skills course, as well as a course in psychology, financial consulting, and law," she says about her journey that has led to finding a new job.**

"I attended the computer course for two months, and it was at that time that I was also temporarily employed in Globus. They kept a job open for me in the dairy department. The computer course is really useful for me, as I use the new knowledge when checking shelf life, which is what I am responsible for," Mrs Kuncová describes the use of her newly acquired knowledge. "The course raised our self-confidence. They told us what kind of people we are, from A to Z, and increased our confidence," Mrs Kuncová concludes.

**And what does Mrs Jana Balogová say about her participation in the retraining course? "In a month, I learnt basic computer skills, which is what I was interested in from the very beginning. They also gave us many options, guided us, and tried to find out what was the most suitable for us. They divided us into types: what we were good at, and what field was ideal for us, and then guided us accordingly."**

"I tried three times to find a job, but I wasn't successful in any of them. I think it was because of my age," Mrs Balogová says, indicating that the way to a new job was not easy. "I knew I'd enjoy selling most of all, so Edost, a company co-operating with the Chomutov Labour Office contact point, focused on sales companies – and I got a part-time job in Globus. Finally, I was employed in the fresh food department," Mrs Balogová describes the happy outcome of her effort. "The retraining course gave me a chance to find employment, and enabled me to be with people, which I would otherwise miss so much."



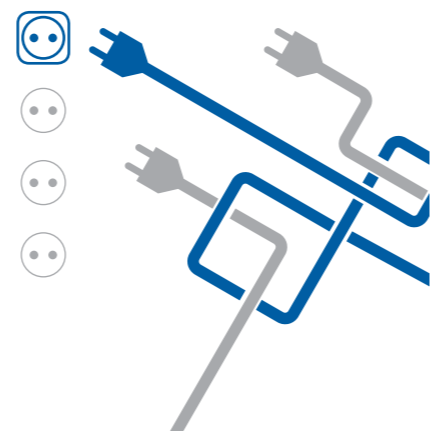
**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 1.2

**Project title:** RESTART-Chomutov

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/1.2.00/37.00003

**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem, Chomutov Labour Office contact point

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# Vincenc Studený

I have a job and life security again



**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 1.2

**Project title:** RESTART-Chomutov

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/1.2.00/37.00003

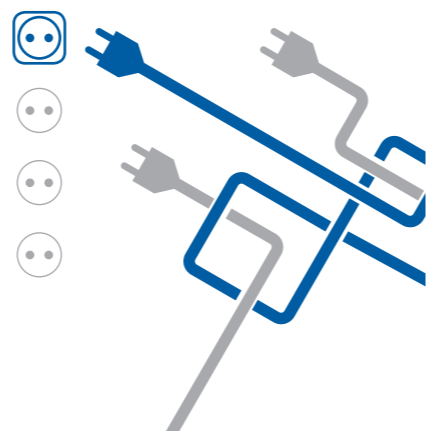
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**“The company where I worked went bankrupt. Fortunately, I got an offer to participate in the ‘RESTART-Chomutov’ project, so now I have a job again.” The words by Vincenc Studený from Jirkov confirm that this project really works.**

“I originally worked for R.B. Farquhar, s.r.o. I was there for three years as a tiler. But the company went bankrupt,” recalls fifty-two-year-old Vincenc Studený. “Fortunately, a man from the ‘RESTART-Chomutov’ project came and offered the opportunity for dismissed employees to join it.” Mr Studený completed a forklift operator retraining course, as well as crane operator and slinger courses. He understands that the courses are not cheap, so he greatly appreciates that he could attend them free of charge. “Moreover, the company didn’t pay us our salaries, so I couldn’t afford to pay it all myself,” he says.

He considers all stages of the project beneficial. “The psychological tests were really useful, because we learnt something about ourselves, and it was also important that we were with our workmates. All the people from the factory went there,” he adds. Mr Studený was offered a job in MŠ TRANS – Miloš Šulc in Chomutov, where he now works as a mechanic. “I found the job in MŠ TRANS – Miloš Šulc myself. I was contacted and recruited by the company director. I must say that the certificates and courses were very useful at that moment. I work as a mechanic. I mainly use a forklift here,” he says. He is happy that he has a secure job and income for his family again. “I have a contract for an indefinite period, we’re secured, and the boss is nice to us – he even buys us lunches,” he laughs.



# František Wittmann

Thanks to MoLSA’s support I got a job in a new field



**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 1.2

**Project title:** RESTART-Chomutov

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/1.2.00/37.00003

**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem, Chomutov Labour Office contact point

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**Fifty-four-year-old František Wittmann from Údlice found a job in a new field through participation in the “RESTART-Chomutov” project.**

“I worked for R.B. Farquhar, s.r.o. as a plumber, but the company went bankrupt. Until then, I had thought that anyone who really wants to can always find a job,” Mr Wittmann recalls the termination of his previous employment. “But I didn’t expect that my age would be such a problem for employers. I submitted application forms together with young guys, but while they were invited to interviews, I wasn’t,” he describes his troubles looking for a new job. Before he was dismissed from his previous employment, he was offered to participate in the RESTART-Chomutov project.

“They contacted us directly at work, before we registered with the Labour Office. I obtained a forklift operator certificate, and then I immediately got a job at Hunter Douglas Kadaň s.r.o. Unfortunately, I was fired when I was still in the probationary period.” However, the completed course was by no means an unnecessary time investment: “I’m glad I have the forklift operator certificate. Every employer asks about it. The RESTART-Chomutov is a good project that enables you to take different courses, and you have a better chance to be employed. I’d recommend it to others.”

Mr Wittmann didn’t stay without a job for long: “I found a job in MŠ TRANS – Miloš Šulc, like my colleague. He said to his boss who had hired him that he wanted to take me with him. It turned out well, and I work here as a mechanic. I’m happy. I have a secure job, and it’s close to my home, so I can ride my bike to work,” he concludes his story in a satisfied tone.



# Jan Fišnar

## A new start with MoLSA's support

Jan Fišnar had been facing the threat of losing a job for a long time. A radical turning point came when he noticed a leaflet on his former employer's premises, offering a retraining course within an active project that was being implemented by the Šumperk District Chamber of Commerce.

As a trained car mechanic, he went through several companies in Šumperk and Zábřeh, worked as a technician and a car dealer, and his pay was delayed. He had two children and a wife on maternity leave at home: a difficult situation for the breadwinner of the family. "I thought it might be a chance for me, and it worked. Now I have a stable job, and I'm happy," the thirty-six-year-old man describes the turnaround in his life.

A few days' course was organized by the Šumperk District Chamber of Commerce. Within the course, Jan Fišnar learnt how to write a cover letter and a CV, improved his computer skills, and, together with the teacher, focused on what direction his professional life could take. Finally, they chose a forklift operator course. During the course, he also received a job offer from Vápenka Vitošov: "You just see the lime works from everywhere here. I'd always wondered what it looked like in the quarry," says Jan Fišnar. Now he has an employment contract for an indefinite period. "Finally I have a stable job, regular pay, and benefits such as work clothes. What else could I ask for?" says the young man.

The project is designed for people in their notice period who are threatened by unemployment. The important advantage of the course is that it is provided free of charge, and that it is designed not only to re-train people, but also to help them find a job. "I would definitely recommend the course to everyone. It was a new start for me," concludes Jan Fišnar, a Zábřeh resident.

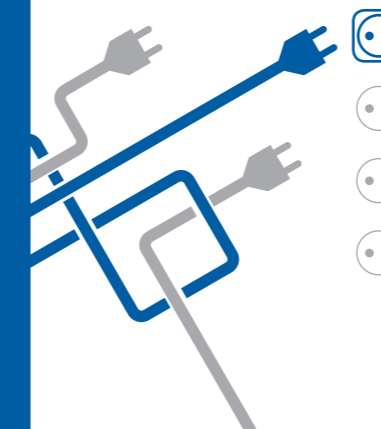
Type of project: Grant project 1.2

Project title: Labour market skills development of OHK Šumperk member companies' employees

Project number: CZ.1.04/1.2.05/36.00021

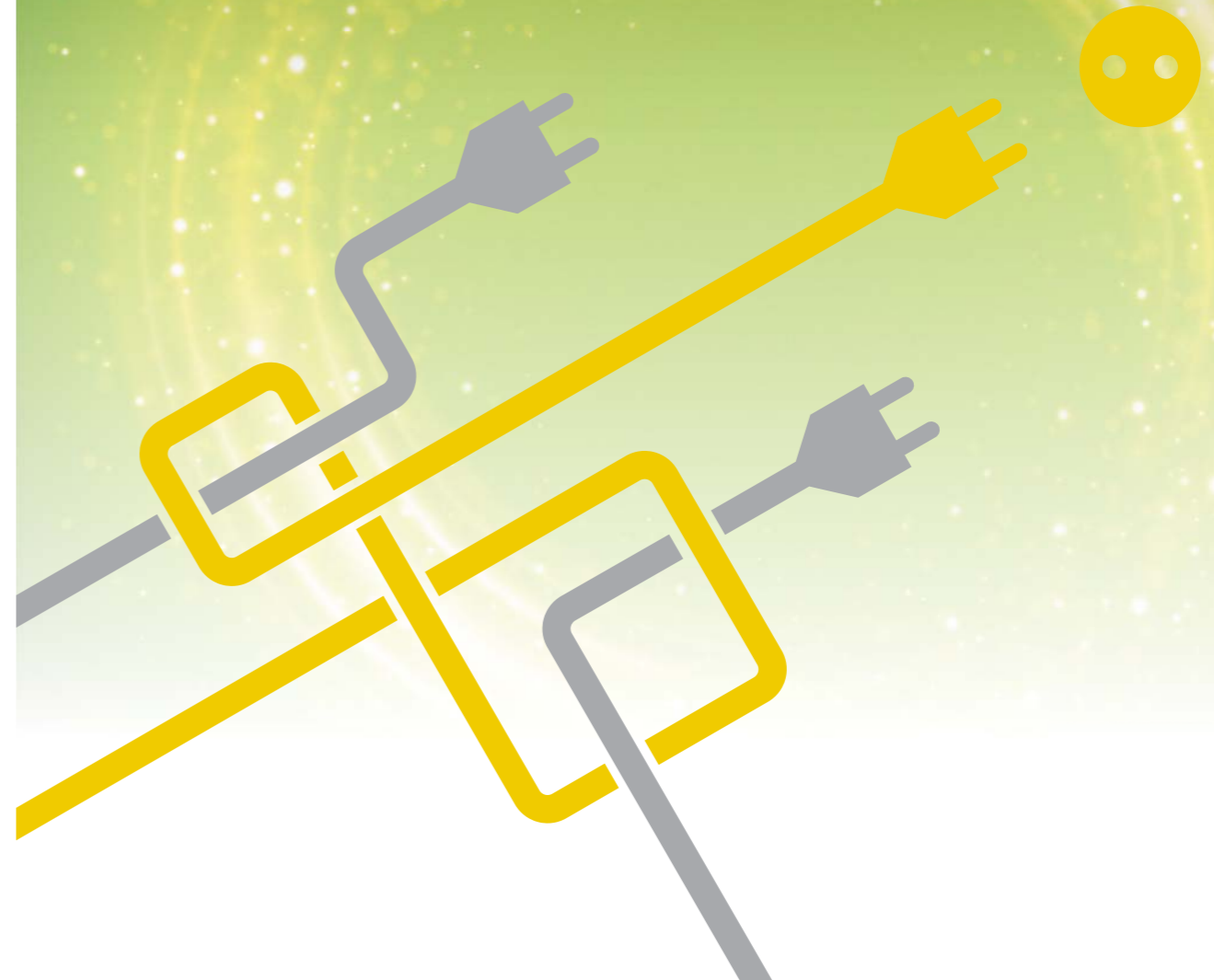
Recipient: OHK Šumperk

In the Šumperk region, many companies are reducing staff numbers. Therefore, the project brings new hope in the search for a job for employees who have been laid off, or who will be laid off by their employers within 3 months of joining the project, in connection with organizational changes. After re-training, they will benefit from flexible forms of work organization.





## 2.1 Reinforcement of Active Employment Policies





# Helena Macková

You've got to put your heart into your work



**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 2.1

**Project title:**  
CREDIT – Social Economy in the Most Region

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.00/13.00064

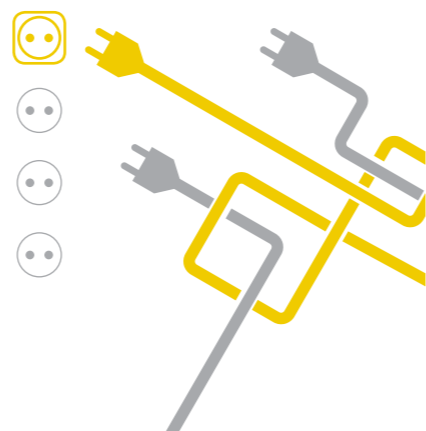
**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem, Most Labour Office contact point

The project sought to integrate physically disabled candidates into the labour market through the implementation of the principles of social economy. Suitable employers that can become "social enterprises" and continue to employ disadvantaged people in order to integrate them gradually into the free market have been selected for the participants, based on the characteristics of specific disadvantages.

**Helena Macková used to be an accountant, but now works as a carer. However, the path to this profession wasn't easy. She once also reached the end of her tether.**

After completing general upper secondary school, she joined the state-owned Housing Management Enterprise as an accountant, responsible for leases. "It was completely different to what I do now, but it was also interesting work with people," she recalls. She worked there for over twenty years, but then she had an accident that turned her life upside down. She was ill for six months. In the hospital for the chronically ill, she came into contact with old people, and she tried to care for them. "It was good experience," she says. After a difficult period in the hospital when she found a new purpose in life, she took a carer course.

She found caring for others interesting and enjoyable, but she couldn't find a suitable job. Then she joined the "CREDIT" project, and she was offered a job at the Regional Charity Most, where she works as a carer. She cares for people who need help. "It's particularly care for the elderly. I'm responsible, for example, for a ninety-five-year-old woman. She is a vital lady. We have so much fun together – it's incredible," says Helena. "The most important thing is to communicate with people. This is what each and every person wants. If you talk with them, they feel important and they don't feel lonely. They need to know that you care about them," she describes her experience.



# Jana Švancarová

It's important to keep trying and to be active



**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 2.1

**Project title:**  
CREDIT – Social Economy in the Most Region

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.00/13.00064

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**Jana Švancarová moved to Most when she was eighteen years old. She worked in Vtelno orchards.**

"I enjoyed it there. I liked working outside, in the sun," she recalls. Then she had her first child, later another, and she was suddenly faced with parental concerns. She couldn't get a day nursery, so she decided to work as a cleaning lady in the hospital where she had worked until the Velvet Revolution. The hospital enabled her to take a medical orderly course. Then she took care of patients, fed them, and dressed them too.

She did the job for seventeen years, but eventually, due to her deteriorating health, she had to leave and look for another job. She worked in a sheltered workshop producing porcelain for six months. "The workshop was closed down. It was a pity, because I liked the work. Everything suddenly seemed sad to me," she says. The Labour Officer first offered her a motivational course. "Then I got a call from a man from ASISTA, an organization which co-operates with the Most Labour Office contact point on the implementation of the 'CREDIT – Social Economy in the Most Region' project and he offered me the opportunity to participate in the project. If you lose your job and you're at home all day, it gets you down, everything becomes meaningless. But the project is based on order and motivation. When you attend a retraining course, it is important to keep trying, to be active, and to communicate with the teacher and with other participants," says Jana with satisfaction. And thirty-seven-year-old Ondřej Najmon, a disability pensioner cared for by Mrs Švancarová within the Most Regional Charity, is also satisfied with Jana's work.

"I'm glad I have her," he says about her. "He lives alone. He can only take care of himself when someone guides him. For example, I've guided him to the stage that he is able to manage his money," says fifty-year-old Jana, who has managed to cope with her own handicap and overcome unemployment, and now helps others.

# Petr Houška

It would have been hard for me to find a job on my own, but thanks to MoLSA I found one



**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 2.1

**Project title:**  
CREDIT – Social Economy in the Most Region

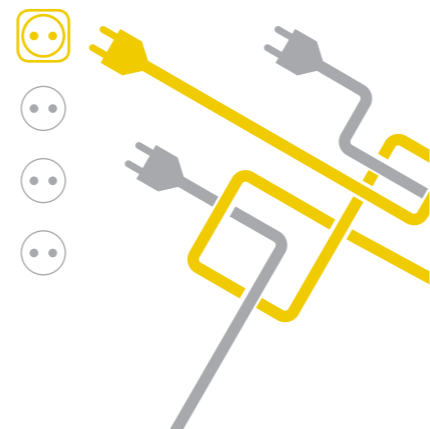
**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.00/13.00064

**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem, Most Labour Office contact point

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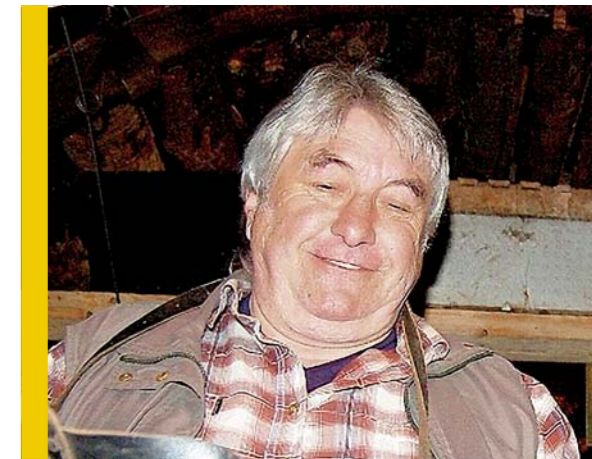
Despite his disability, Petr Houška trained as a locksmith, but after he finished school, he was registered with the Labour Office for some time. Then he suffered a serious illness. At nineteen, he received a full disability pension, but it was reassessed to a partial disability pension. Initially, he tried to appeal, as he wasn't sure that his health was good enough and that he could start working. Due to his handicap, he was rejected by employers and eventually ended up at the Labour Office, where he was registered until 2008. “It was hard. Nobody wanted me. I barely made ends meet,” he recalls.

Then, through a friend, he found a full-time job with a security agency, guarding a chemical plant. “I had no relief. I worked like the others, who were healthy. Then one day they decided to reduce the number of employees, and I had to go, after eighteen months of employment,” he says. He was again registered with the Labour Office; it was nearly two years later that he was offered an opportunity to join the “CREDIT – Social Economy in the Most Region” project, and he completed it. The courses helped him improve his computer skills, and he also learnt how to use a brush cutter and how to write a CV. “Then a man from ASISTA, a company co-operating with the Most Labour Office contact point on the implementation of the CREDIT project, found a job as a museum guard for me,” he says. He works twelve-hour shifts, guarding the Ore Mountain Foothills Technical Museum, established in a former mine. “It would have been hard for me to find a job on my own. It's better than being at home,” he says, adding: “The hardest thing is the commute.” In order to get to work, he has to walk on a deserted road every day, because there is no bus connection. Anyone else would have given up, but Petr has a strong will. Although his journey to and from work is not easy, the ritual is worth it. He likes his job.



# Vladimír Vagaši

A new job opportunity with MoLSA's support



**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 2.1

**Project title:**  
CREDIT – Social Economy in the Most Region

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.00/13.00064

**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem, Most Labour Office contact point

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A former manager, sixty-one-year-old Vladimír Vagaši from Most works as a guide in the Ore Mountain Foothills Technical Museum, located between Most and Litvínov. As is common in public benefit corporations, he also performs other tasks, as necessary.

His journey to a job in what is called a “mining museum” was quite complicated. Vladimír graduated from economics and worked for the Restaurace Most state enterprise as the sales-operation director's deputy. After the Velvet Revolution, he co-founded a joint-stock company – a hotel. “I ran the hotel with my colleagues for about thirteen years. Then the majority owner from Prague got rid of it, and the new owners appointed new management. I was without a job, and eventually I ended up at the Labour Office,” he says.

He became unemployed at the age of fifty-six. He was registered with the Most Labour Office contact point for about two years. “I took part in everything they offered me,” he recalls the retraining courses. At the regional branch of the Ústí nad Labem Labour Office, he then learnt about ASISTA, which is involved in the “CREDIT” project. “They offered me the opportunity to return to work. I accepted it and attended another long-term training course, already under the auspices of ASISTA,” he says. He was recommended a job in a public benefit corporation. “They offered me a job as a guide. I didn't hesitate for a second, because at my age it would have been almost impossible to find anything else,” he says, two years after the life change that led him to the museum. He shows visitors different expositions mapping particularly the history of coal mining in Northwestern Bohemia. And because he never worked in a mine, he had to learn everything to be able to describe the mining profession to people. He is going to retire next year, yet he plans to continue to work in the museum – he enjoys his job.



# Věra Vykoukalová

A project cofinanced by MoLSA helped me find a job again



**Věra Vykoukalová found herself without a job a few years before retirement. Searching for a new one became a nightmare. Potential employers were discouraged by the combination of partial disability and old age. Fortunately, this was only until she was invited to participate in the “CREDIT” project, which helped many people in the Most region in difficult situations, unsuccessfully looking for employment for a long time.**



In her youth, she trained as a dressmaker in Benar in Litvínov. After two maternity leaves, she started work in the chemical plant, because in Benar she would have had to work shifts like her husband, who worked for the railway. Having two children, she could only do morning shifts, so she joined the chemical plant as a sampler, and was also responsible for paperwork. When her position was cancelled after some time, she found a job as a cleaner, which was her employment for nearly twenty years. When she began to have problems with a hip joint, she had to undergo an operation. She couldn't work for a year, and lost her job.



She could enjoy her free time, but she wanted to go back to work. “I worked all my life, I'm used to it. I can't just sit around, doing nothing. At least I can be among people,” she explains why she didn't hesitate, and accepted the offer from the Most Labour Office contact point to join the CREDIT project. First, she accepted the offer from the Labour Office for a three-month chef retraining course. Then she joined the CREDIT project, implemented by the regional branch of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem in co-operation with the ASISTA organization, and during a training course she was offered a job in a sewing room. Sewing was an ideal solution for her. “This is work in a sitting position, so it shouldn't be a problem for you,” I was told by the man from ASISTA, which organized the CREDIT project. I did a bit of sewing at home, and I learnt something in the course, so I took the job and stayed. I've been working here a little over a year now, I enjoy the work, and I'm happy,” she says. She helps the forewoman with easier tasks, because she is limited by her health. “There's always something to do. I did the ironing in the morning, and tomorrow I'll do it again,” she describes her schedule. She works from Monday to Friday, 8 hours a day. Her normal working day is busy. “There are people who need to sew on a jacket zip, shorten trousers, do the washing and ironing, but they can't do it or don't have time. We have always a lot to do,” confirms her forewoman. “The project was really meaningful. It wasn't a waste of money. We should continue to invest in such assistance,” she concludes her story with a happy ending.



**Type of project:**  
Regional individual project 2.1

**Project title:**  
CREDIT – Social Economy in the Most Region

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.00/13.00064

**Recipient:** Labour Office of the Czech Republic, Regional branch of the Labour Office in Ústí nad Labem, Most Labour Office contact point

The project sought to integrate physically disabled candidates into the labour market through the implementation of the principles of social economy. Suitable employers that can become “social enterprises” and continue to employ disadvantaged people in order to integrate them gradually into the free market have been selected for the participants, based on the characteristics of specific disadvantages.

# Kateřina Martynková

We have such a family environment here



**Type of project:** Grant project 2.1

**Project title:** Picklock – opens the door to the return to the labour market

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.01/63.00031

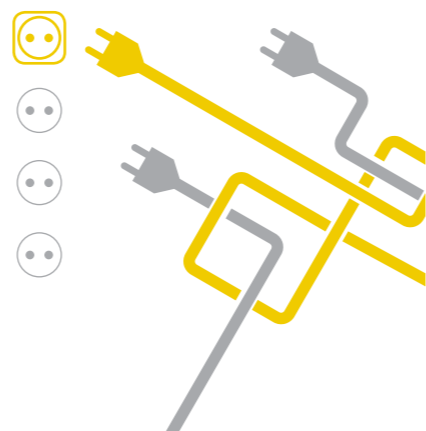
**Recipient:**  
Qualification and personal agency, o. p. s.

Within the project, the Counselling and Training Centre was established in the town of Jablunkov, the heart of the Jablunkov micro-region. Those interested in retraining can gain computer skills or attend retraining courses. Thanks to the project, 13 new full-time jobs were created, all in non-profit organizations in the Třinec/Jablunkov region.

**Twenty-nine-year-old Kateřina Martynková from Bocanovice works with clients at the St Elizabeth Home in Jablunkov. She entered the environment that she knew wasn't really about fun things, but she wasn't afraid. She has small children, so she is very happy about working part-time.**

Her path to the Picklock project, which helped her find a job, wasn't direct. "I came to the St Elizabeth Home to ask Sister Imelda about work when I was still on maternity leave, because I had worked in a retirement home in Třinec – as a nurse," explains Kateřina Martynková. Several days later she received a phone call. "They called me saying that a woman was just leaving the Picklock project, and that they had a vacancy," the young woman from Bocanovice describes the situation. With respect to what her everyday work looks like, she says: "It's typical nursing. We do what is necessary. But every client is different." When asked whether she was afraid to start work in a retirement home, she answered vigorously: "No, I wasn't. You know what? I had maybe 120 hours of practice here, ten years ago, when I attended a course. So I knew what I was getting into. I also had an advantage in that I had worked in a retirement home."

Kateřina Martynková is convinced that the Picklock project is meaningful. "It has definitely helped me a lot," she adds.



# Bronislava Wiszczorová

MoLSA helped me find a job



**Type of project:** Grant project 2.1

**Project title:** Picklock – opens the door to the return to the labour market

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.01/63.00031

**Recipient:**  
Qualification and personal agency, o. p. s.

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**Mrs Bronislava Wiszczorová lives in Jablunkov, where it is very difficult to find employment. Thanks to the Picklock project, she found a job at the St Elizabeth Home in Jablunkov.**

It is very close to her flat. "It's just perfect for me. I liked working in the kitchen right from the start. Our team is great, and we also have fun," says the fifty-eight-year old woman who was previously unemployed for a long time.

She became interested in the Picklock project after she learnt at the Jablunkov Labour Office contact point that the Qualification and Personnel Agency (KaPA) was looking for people like her. "During the presentation, we were told about what kind of courses the agency organizes, and that we could start working again through the Picklock project. I thought I might attend a social worker course. I wasn't really fascinated by computers, as my eyes are a little old," she smiles modestly. From time to time she asked St Elizabeth sisters if they had a job for her. "It's not far for me, and I thought it would be nice. So they knew about me. And, coincidentally, about three days after the presentation given by the KaPA agency, which co-operates with the Jablunkov Labour Office contact point on the implementation of the Picklock project, Mother Superior called me to come to the office. I learnt that they were opening a position – for a person looking for employment for a long time and not being able to integrate in the labour market," explains Bronislava Wiszczorová.

What are her responsibilities? "It depends on what we cook that day. It's always different," she laughs. Would she recommend the Picklock project to people around her? "Definitely. Because there are so many unemployed people. And there are few job opportunities. It's not like in larger cities, such as Prague. It's really terrible here," says Bronislava Wiszczorová. She believes that without the Picklock project, looking for a job would probably be much more complicated.

# Urszula Koky

I accepted the offer without hesitation



**Type of project:** Grant project 2.1

**Project title:** Picklock – opens the door to the return to the labour market

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.01/63.00031

**Recipient:**  
Qualification and personal agency, o. p. s.

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# Dana Nieslaniková

Dana Nieslaniková likes clients, and they like her



**Type of project:** Grant project 2.1

**Project title:** Picklock – opens the door to the return to the labour market

**Project number:** CZ.1.04/2.1.01/63.00031

**Recipient:**  
Qualification and personal agency, o. p. s.

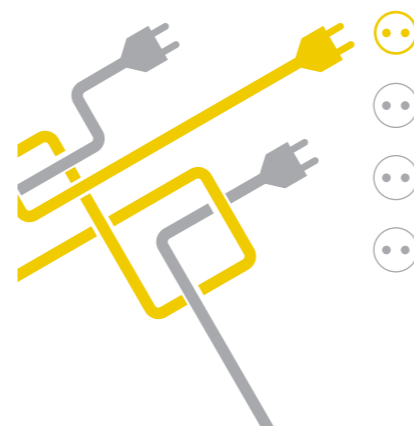
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**The St Joseph Day Care Centre for Young People with Disabilities in Jablunkov is full of cheer in the morning. The clients like Urszula Koky, who takes care of them, along with other colleagues. Urszula found a job in this day care centre through the Picklock project.**

She has been working here for over a year now. "It's mostly about communication. The clients must be treated very naturally, spontaneously, and then you can lead them out of the shell of addiction." She has small children, so it was difficult even for her to find employment. "It was unthinkable for me to leave my children for eight hours. I went to the Qualification and Personnel Agency (KaPA), and I was offered a job as a day care centre social worker," she says. "It was great for me, because I graduated from social work and politics. It was probably thanks to this education that the former director liked me." The young woman from Mosty u Jablunkova is convinced that the Picklock project is important for the region. "It's the same as with me – I see mothers who have been on maternity leave for a long time, who really lose touch with their work after six or even ten years, and they are afraid. Then it is good that there is this gradual integration, that you come to an organization where you can take different courses, you are among people again, and you hear technical terms that you've forgotten."

**A mother of three, Dana Nieslaniková once thought about working with the elderly, and she finally found the job of her dreams at the St Joseph Day Care Centre for Young People with Disabilities.**

"The clients surprised me. I was a little worried about working with them, but I found that I receive a lot from them," she says with emotion. She heard from her friends that the KaPA agency organizes courses, with financial support provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. She enrolled on the monthly course "Social Services Worker". "They were interested in hiring new employees in the day care centre. I was really happy, because I was recommended a four-hour job. I have three children, so I take them to school and nursery in the morning, and then I can go to work."



# Pavel Zielina

When you talk with people, they open up



Type of project: Grant project 2.1

Project title: Picklock – opens the door to the return to the labour market

Project number: CZ.1.04/2.1.01/63.00031

Recipient: Qualification and personal agency, o. p. s.

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**Fifty-eight-year-old Pavel Zielina used to sell cork throughout North and South Moravia. “I was totally immersed in my business,” he recalls. Then his life suddenly turned upside down.**

“When my parents fell ill, my values completely changed. God changed me. He changed my mind-set. And I stopped my business,” says Pavel Zielina, adding that he became the leader of a prayer group. It all began with the death of his father, and then he took “full-time” care of his mother. Before long, Mr Zielina registered with the Labour Office. But he was hit again – his mother died. At the time when Pavel Zielina was wondering whether, after all, he should return to business, his friend from the Parish Congregation of the Silesian Evangelical Church told him about the start of the Picklock project, which could help him find a job again. “I took a social care worker retraining course organized by the KaPA agency within the Picklock project. It lasted six weeks, and it included 80 hours of practical training. I’m grateful for it, because it broadened my horizons,” says Pavel Zielina.

Last year he learnt about the Picklock project, which helped him succeed in a field in which he had some previous experience. Now he works for Christian community in Třinec, helping people who have ended up on the fringe of society.

In his work he often meets people struggling with different addictions: “Any addiction is very dangerous for harmonious human life. For example, I work with alcoholics, but I know from my experience that even these people have a chance to recover.” He has been recently pleased by the metamorphosis of an incorrigible repeat offender who managed to change his life.

Pavel Zielina says with a smile that he has become “almost professional”. He stresses that all activities are completely voluntary for clients, adding a comment about the Picklock project: “It’s a good project that gives people jobs, and is also useful for others.”

# Bohuslav Szotkowski

With MoLSA’s support I can help the homeless



Type of project: Grant project 2.1

Project title: Picklock – opens the door to the return to the labour market

Project number: CZ.1.04/2.1.01/63.00031

Recipient: Qualification and personal agency, o. p. s.

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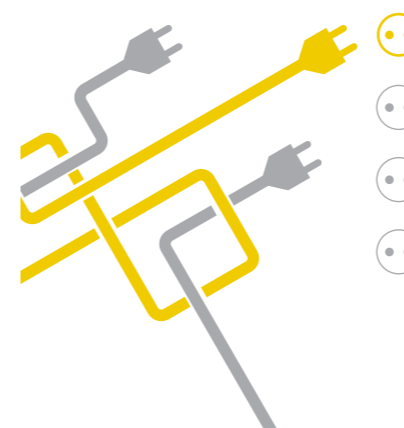
**Forty-three-year-old Bohuslav Szotkowski from Mosty u Jablunkova commutes five times a week to Třinec. A good chess player, he works in the BETHEL Třinec low-threshold day centre. He helps there people without homes, without backgrounds, without money. The BETHEL Třinec centre is one of several dozen centres run by Slezská diakonie, a non-governmental, non-profit organization providing its social services especially in the Moravian-Silesian Region. Bohuslav Szotkowski found his new job through the Picklock project.**

“I learnt about the Picklock project from Labour Office staff,” recalls Mr Szotkowski. “I wanted to try working in the social field. Within the Picklock project, I attended the Open Door Day in Jablunkov. Then, I got a call one day, and I was asked if I wanted to participate in the competitive examination for a vacancy in the BETHEL day centre,” he describes subsequent developments.

“I collect articles relating to homelessness. I especially try to find positive news, which is normally ignored. It encourages people,” says Mr Szotkowski with hope. “I also say to everyone: If you are a believer, turn to God. God sees farther than we do. This is how I actually create motivational interviews.”

He has nothing but praise for the work done by the Picklock people: “I was unemployed for over ten months, and the ladies who worked there recommended this competitive examination to me. Thanks to the willingness of people from the Picklock project, I have a job which is challenging, but which also gives me satisfaction.”

And he adds: “I believe there is a chance for everybody.”





# Marcela Machková

## I became a flower shop owner overnight

⊙⊙ **Thirty-year-old Marcela Machková is well known in Třinec-Staré Město. She is the owner of a flower shop located in the centre of the metallurgical town. “It’s been a big change for me, and it’s made my life a lot better,” says the agreeable woman cheerfully, although she admits that she is going through a hectic period. Within a few days, her fate, with the significant help of the Picklock project, decided that she would become self-employed and run her own business.**

⊙⊙ “During my parental leave I worked in my friend’s flower shop. Thanks to the non-profit organization KaPA I learned about the course, and about the Picklock project,” she says. “I completed an eleven-day floristry course. It was different from what I studied, but it was interesting, and I enjoyed it,” she says, adding that she tried to find as much information and practical advice about floriculture as possible. “The course was very helpful for my future employment. I had no basics, even though I had worked in a flower shop on a temporary basis. I really got the basics in the course. In fact, we learned everything in the course, from congratulatory to funeral arrangements, which we use a lot. What I also considered beneficial was further information from the teacher,” says Marcela Machková.

⊙⊙ And how did she acquire this shop? “It was a special situation. During the course, organized as part of the Picklock project, I talked with the teacher about her work. She was the owner of this shop – and as she was very busy, I got an offer to buy the shop from her. And I accepted it. We agreed on everything within a week. It was really fast,” explains Marcela Machková. She also fulfilled the condition that she would keep the original employees in the established flower shop in the beginning. “We have managed to get some new customers,” she says proudly. Based on her contacts, she is very busy, not only during holidays. “There are definitely more people who deserve to know about the Picklock project. It’s for those who can’t find employment for a long time. I want to inform them about this option,” says Marcela Machková. “It’s an interesting project. The course that I attended is not common. It focused on an area that wasn’t covered.”

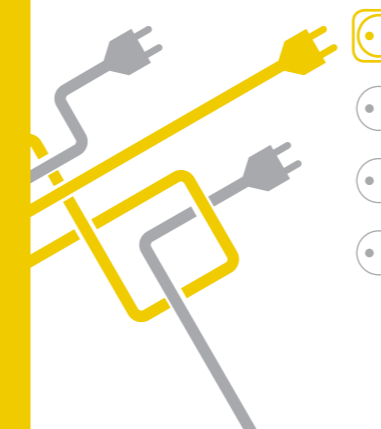
Type of project: Grant project 2.1

Project title: Picklock – opens the door to the return to the labour market

Project number: CZ.1.04/2.1.01/63.00031

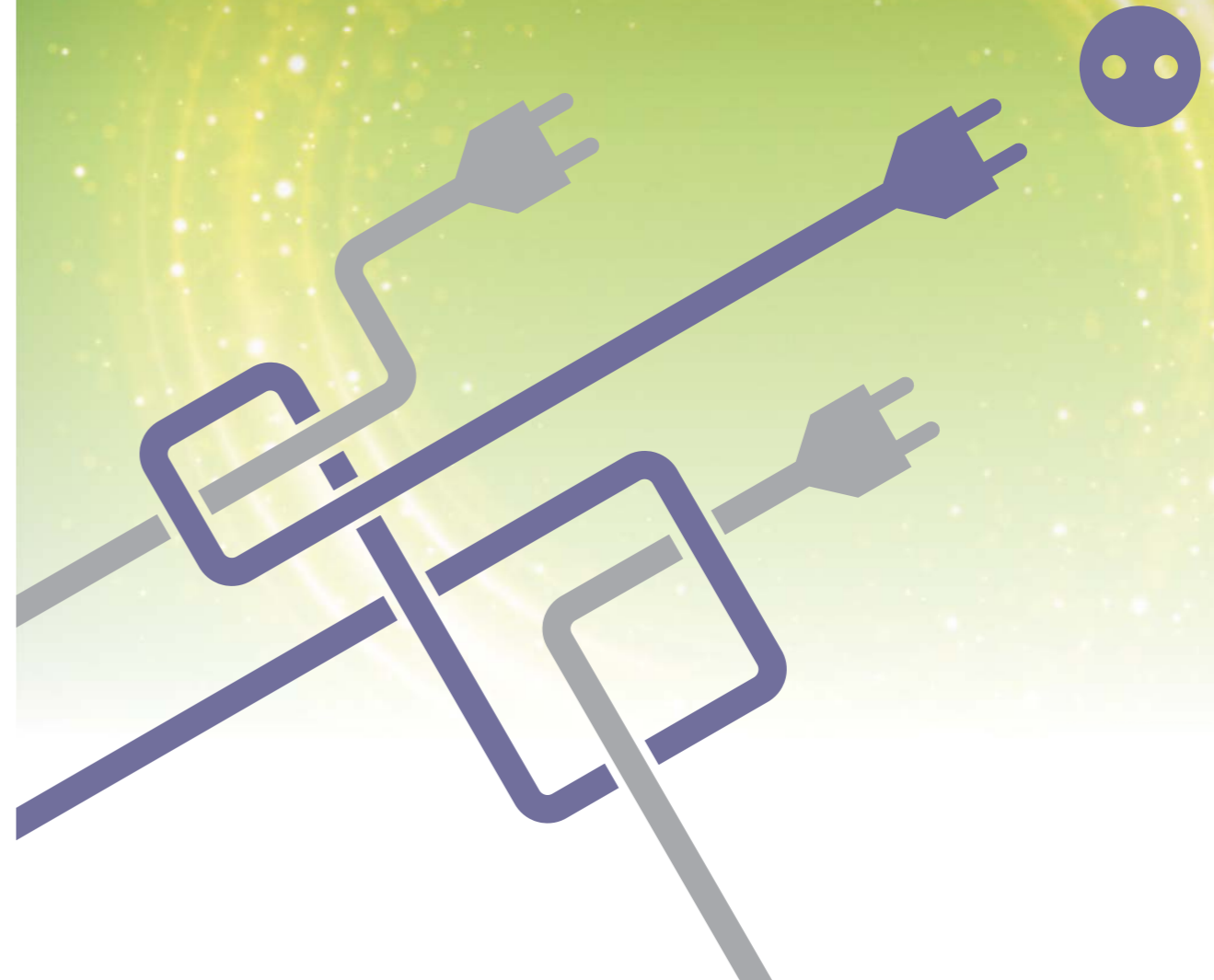
Recipient: Qualification and personal agency, o. p. s.

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### 3.1 Support of Social Integration and Social Services







# Adriana Gašová

MoLSA has helped me gain a greater perspective of my work



**Adriana Gašová, an employee of the Havířov branch of the Salvation Army, decided to join the project called "The Salvation Army – Training 2010".**



"I wanted to learn something new that I could use later in a meaningful way," she said about her involvement in the project.



She used the recommended procedures to help one of the clients when she was still attending the course. The project partly changed her way of working. "I have gained a greater perspective. We saw the biggest changes in the formation of individual clients' plans. Now we know exactly how to prioritize, and how to subsequently continue to work with our clients," says Mrs Gašová. After completing "The Salvation Army – Training 2010" project, she began looking at communication possibilities more sensitively. "I'm able to stay more above it, and therefore I can respond better and deal with different cases more effectively and purposefully," she said, adding that she would definitely recommend participating in similar projects to all her colleagues.



**Type of project:** Grant project 3.1

**Project title:**  
The Salvation Army – Training 2010

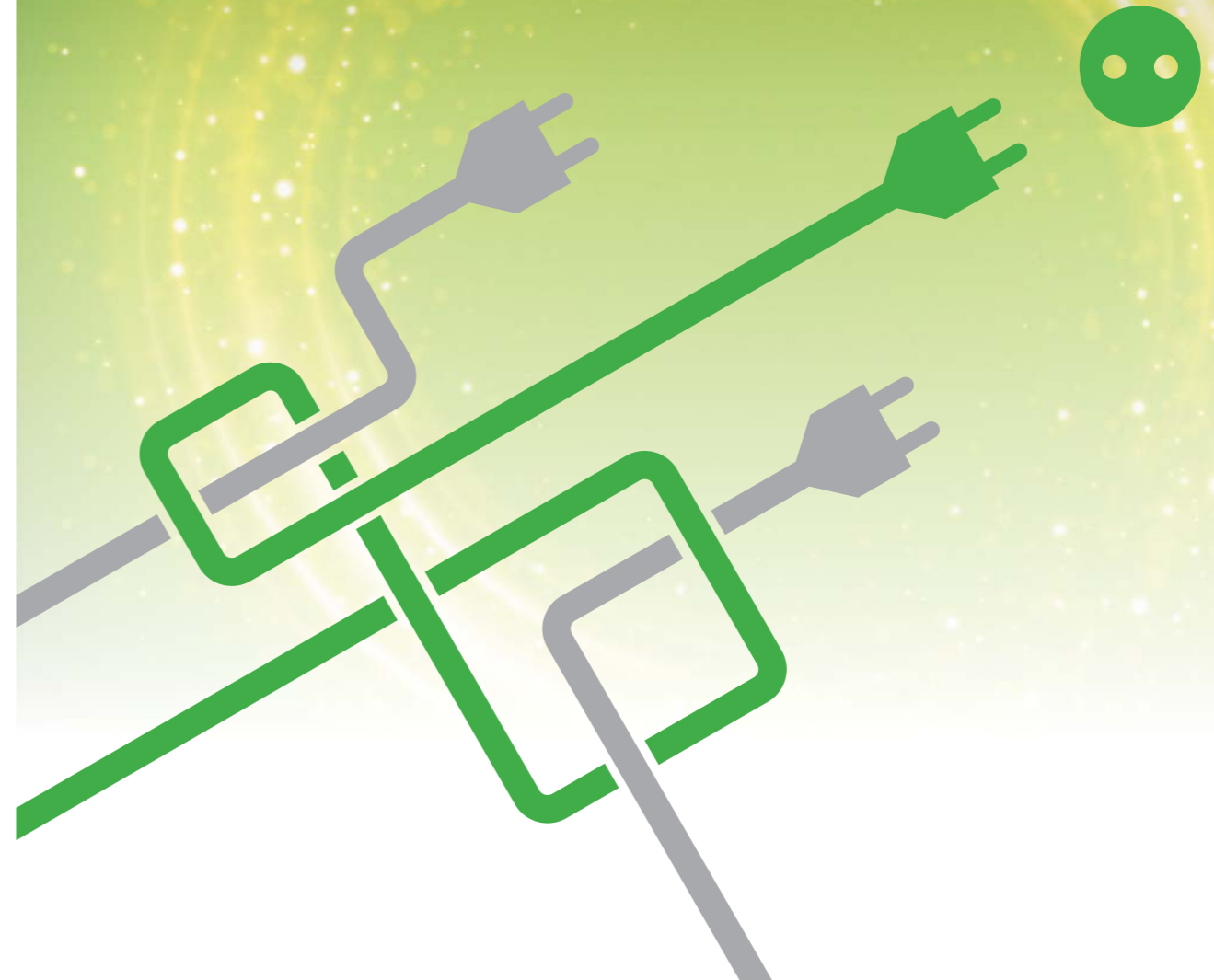
**Project number:** CZ.1.04/3.1.03/45.00098

**Recipient:**  
The Salvation Army in the Czech Republic

The aim of the project is to increase the qualifications and competencies of Salvation Army employees, as well as systematic support in the process of improving the quality of social services in practice, which will lead to the re-integration of social service users into society and the labour market.

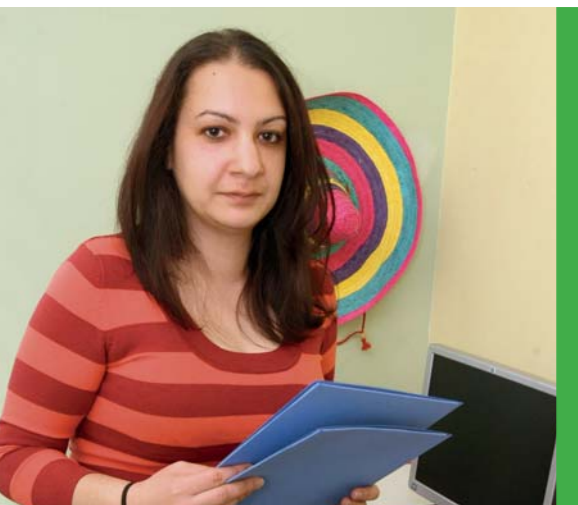


## 3.2 Support of Social Integration of Members of Roma Localities



# Vlasta Džudžová

A project supported by MoLSA helped the thirty-year-old woman find a job



Type of project: Grant project 3.2

Project title: We Want a Chance

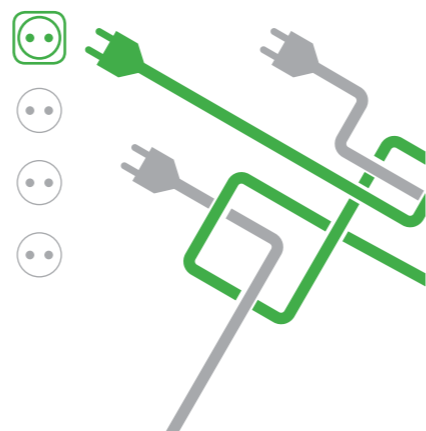
Project number: CZ.1.04/3.2.01/19.00201

Recipient: Counselling Centre for Citizenship, Civil and Human Rights

The aim of the project is to provide social services in combination with legal counselling to people living in socially excluded localities. Social-legal counselling helps clients deal with debts or problems in the care of children, often threatened by ordered institutional care. The provision of services is based on field social work in the localities in combination with counselling at organization branches.

**Vlasta Džudžová lived mostly on social benefits. She was occasionally offered a part-time job, but she wasn't able to find permanent employment. "Nobody wanted to employ me, because I had no work experience. I was desperate, but I didn't give up. And I was finally successful," says Mrs Džudžová happily.**

"The Head of the Counselling Centre for Citizenship, Civil and Human Rights accepted me as a client and promised me that we would look for a job for me together," says Vlasta Džudžová. They succeeded about three months later. She was recruited as a project assistant. "It was, and still is, an amazing feeling. I've got my first real job," she says cheerfully. "The very next day I went to our clients with a social worker. I like it more than sitting in the office. I enjoy contact with clients. They accepted me well. I was surprised how they respected me," she says with pride. She represents an example to be followed.



# Zdeněk Gaži

I'd go crazy without work



Type of project: Grant project 3.2

Project title: We Want a Chance

Project number: CZ.1.04/3.2.01/19.00201

Recipient: Counselling Centre for Citizenship, Civil and Human Rights

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**"I love nature and I want it to be clean. If I see a piece of paper somewhere, I automatically pick it up. I just can't help myself," says the forty-five-year-old man. Cleaning and maintenance of vegetation has been his profession since he was eighteen. "What do I like doing most of all? Everything! It makes me happy when I see that I've done a good job," he says. He feels the happiest when his boss sends him to clean up the park.**

The only thing that troubles the incredibly active and always optimistic man is the lack of work and the associated job insecurity. He would like to keep his job forever. Not so much because of the money – as a physically handicapped person he receives a pension, albeit small. What scares him is inactivity. He is aware that a lot of people around him are unemployed, although they are more qualified than him. "We have the most desperate people living here. They just need a chance," he says. He was given such a chance in the Krásné Březno Counselling Centre for Citizenship, Civil and Human Rights, which aims to help people living in socially excluded localities of the Ústí nad Labem region. It implements the "We Want a Chance" project, and Zdenek Gaži was chosen to join it.

"I had no idea that there was such a counselling centre, even though I live in the same neighbourhood. And then when I was passing by, I noticed the sign. I went inside, and that was a really good idea. I often had difficulties with different official things, but now they help me with everything. They never reject me," he says with satisfaction.

# Žaneta Kmeťová

With MoLSA's support, the family has security and a safe environment



Type of project: Grant project 3.2

Project title: Field social work in the socially excluded Roma locality in Orlová-Poruba

Project number: CZ.1.04/3.2.01/19.00121

Recipient: Orlová

The main objective of the project is the gradual integration of persons living in socially excluded localities in Orlová and its subregion, with the help of field social work. Members of the implementation team meet clients both in their places of residence and in the streets, and some even speak Romani, which helps them in their communication with clients. Field workers encourage clients to live a responsible life, to search for employment, and to deal with housing and financial issues.

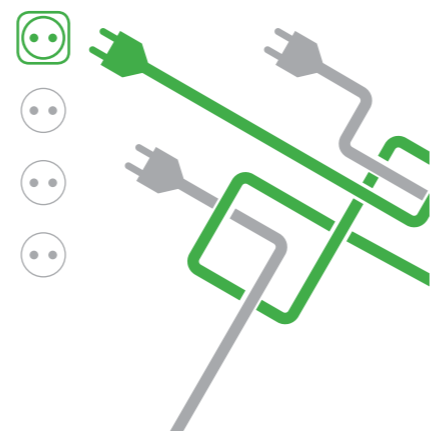
The aim of the project entitled "Field Social Work in the Socially Excluded Roma Locality in Orlová-Poruba" is to approach the target group and include inhabitants from problematic localities into society based on increased availability of social services. Since the project started, the service has been used by more than seven hundred clients, including thirty-four-year-old Žaneta Kmeťová, who moved to Orlová from Ostrava-Přívov with her husband and children.

Mrs Kmeťová was at risk of losing her home and ending up on the street with her children before Christmas.

Her friend told her to go to the field social workers' office. Mrs Kmeťová took her advice and told the social workers about her problems.

"The social workers went with me to a real estate company and helped me get a lease, so my husband, children, and I obtained permanent residency in Orlová. They even helped us with new identity cards. And that's not all they did for me. They also arranged school for my children, a doctor, and a dentist," she explains.

"The social workers really helped me and my family. If it hadn't been for them, we'd have ended up on the street. We would really like to thank them for it. I would recommend the service to anybody," she concludes the interview.



# Andrej Balog

Thanks to MoLSA we live a happier life



Type of project: Grant project 3.2

Project title: Field social work in the socially excluded Roma locality in Orlová-Poruba

Project number: CZ.1.04/3.2.01/19.00121

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"My wife and I had a big problem with poor housing. Fortunately, I heard of field social workers operating here," says Andrej Balog.

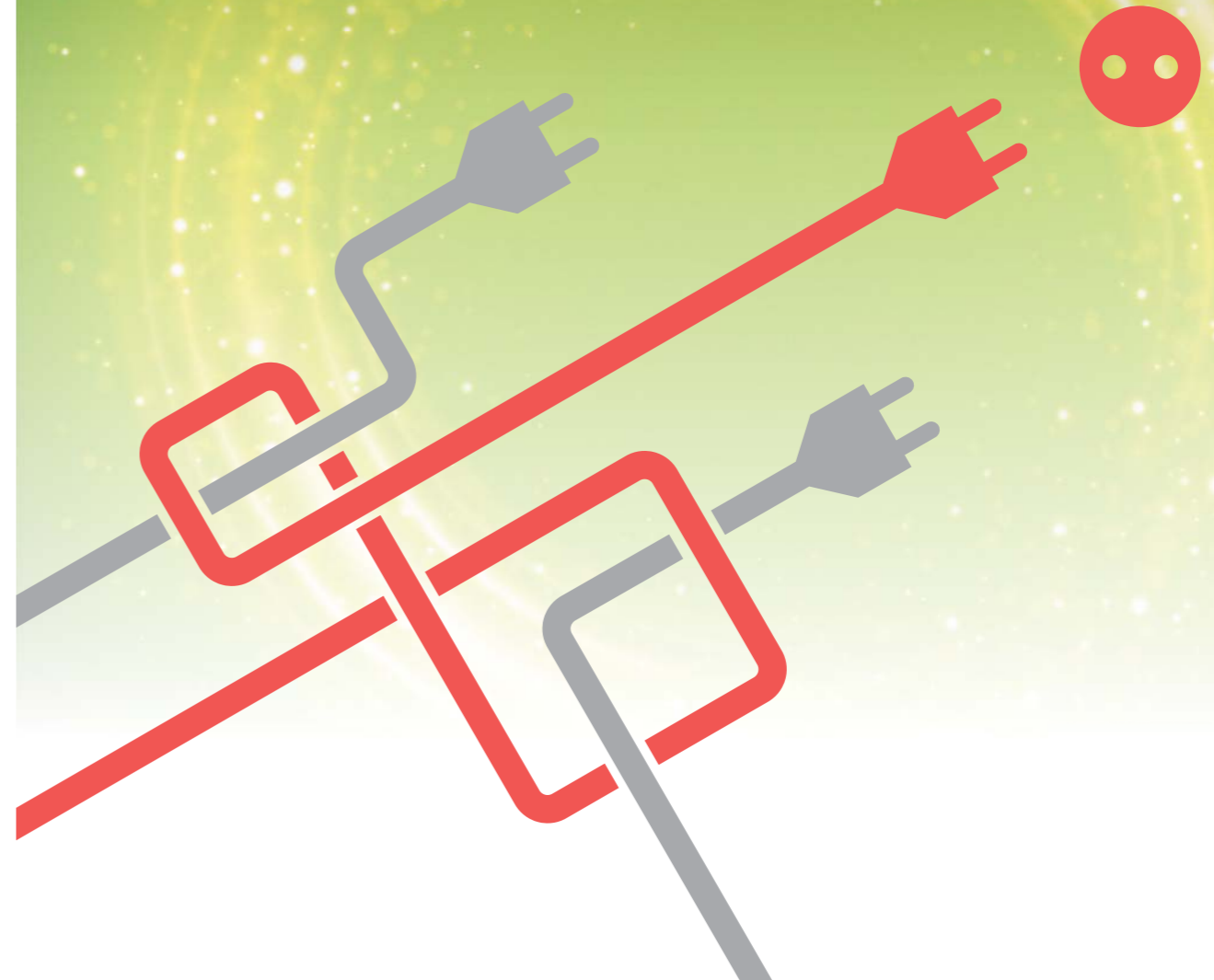
The Balogs weren't satisfied with their housing conditions: "There was always a mess and a bad smell around the house." However, Mr Balog wanted to stay, especially because of his daughter. He needed to obtain a lease, as he hadn't signed one before. The social workers started looking for a way to provide them with alternative accommodation. Finally, they managed to find new, suitable flats, both for the Balogs and their daughter. "I'm so glad that the field workers helped us. We're really happy here." Andrej Balog has nothing but praise for their work. Just as his wife, who is easy prey to all sorts of door-to-door sellers due to her illiteracy. "When I get a letter, I take it to the office where they read it for me and explain what to do and where to go," Mária Balogová describes her experience with field social work.

Mr Balog would definitely recommend the service to anyone who is struggling with a problem that they can't solve without the help of others. Based on his advice, both his daughter and granddaughter are in touch with the field social workers as well.

"Now that I know there is someone I can turn to and rely on, my life here has become a lot easier."



### 3.3 Integration of Socially Excluded Groups in the Labour Market



# Jitka Chladová

I have learned to communicate with deaf people



Type of project: Grant project 3.3

Project title: Stop Communication Barriers!

Project number: CZ.1.04/3.3.05/31.00021

Recipient: Brno Union of the Deaf, o. s.

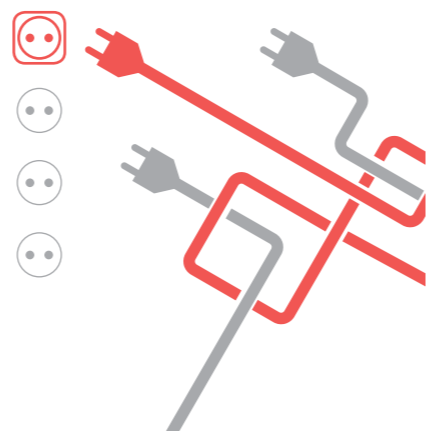
The project focuses on the integration of people with hearing disabilities into the labour market and into society in general. Several new educational activities have been introduced which are directly linked to labour market needs, taking into account the specific needs of deaf people. A new support service, "Deaf Telecommunication Centre", has been established, and a multimedia textbook for deaf people has been created.

**Jitka Chladová talks about how she joined the "Stop Communication Barriers!" project: "I heard about the course from the President of the Union of the Physically Disabled. I thought it was interesting, so I went to try it."**

In 2003, Jitka completed her secondary school study of public administration. Then she started looking for employment, and as the Labour Office wasn't able to help her, she tried to find a job herself. "I worked at a language school as an afternoon receptionist, but I left after the trial period. They wanted me to wear court shoes, which I can't because of my impaired leg."

In July 2010, Jitka Chladová started attending a course to learn the theory of work with deaf people, as well as shorthand. She passed the exams and started working in a call centre for deaf people. Jitka enjoyed helping them: "I thought that I might learn something about the disabled, and that it would be meaningful work."

Thanks to the course and the work, Jitka learnt a lot about deaf people. "I gained an insight into the issue. I didn't know anything about their problems before. Now I know how to communicate with them, even though I can't use sign language."



# Libuše Čabová

Thanks to MoLSA's project, I can help people at work



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**Libuše Čabová heard about the "Stop Communication Barriers!" project from a friend that had participated in it. "I knew that we would work as operators, but I thought that we would only communicate with people by e-mail."**

She had previously worked at the reception of a company, and then had been on maternity leave. "After that I looked for a job at the Labour Office. When I found this one, they asked me how I got it. Originally, I studied public administration at secondary technical school." Mrs Čabová had a close connection to the disabled community her entire life, but this was a new experience for her.

During calls she sometimes experiences reluctance or lack of understanding. "It's mostly the hearing side that doesn't understand. When we introduce ourselves and say that we will mediate a call with a deaf person, they just don't get it."

"The biggest benefit of the course for me was meeting with firefighters, that is learning how to behave in crisis situations. We learnt that we have to get all of the important information from a deaf person in an emergency situation before we dial the emergency number. And above all, stay calm."

And what does Mrs Čabová think of her work? "I like the fact that by what I do I help people who need it." Thanks to this service, deaf people can learn to communicate better with others. And that is meaningful.



# Barbora Brandýská

## Overcoming communication barriers with MoLSA's support



**"I heard about the 'Stop Communication Barriers!' project from a friend of mine. Working with deaf people was nothing new for me: I've always had a close connection with the deaf community, because I have a hearing impairment myself. Right after my maternity leave, I joined a course organized by the Brno Union of the Deaf to become an operator at a call centre for deaf people," says Mrs Brandýská. Now she goes to Královo Pole in Brno every day, where the call centre for deaf people operates.**



"They mostly start calling at around 9 a.m. The communication process starts when a deaf person writes the number they want us to call. We dial the number, and then just interpret what the client writes," she says.



Sometimes Barbora has difficulty understanding the sentence structure. Few people realize that deaf people perceive language differently, and that grammar is difficult for them.



Barbora sees her most significant contribution in helping people who really need it. "It's a great service, because deaf people can learn how to communicate with the hearing. They are less dependent on others. We're just interpreters, so we can't add anything to what they want to say. Sometimes I'd like to help, but I can't. I can only say what the caller tells me."



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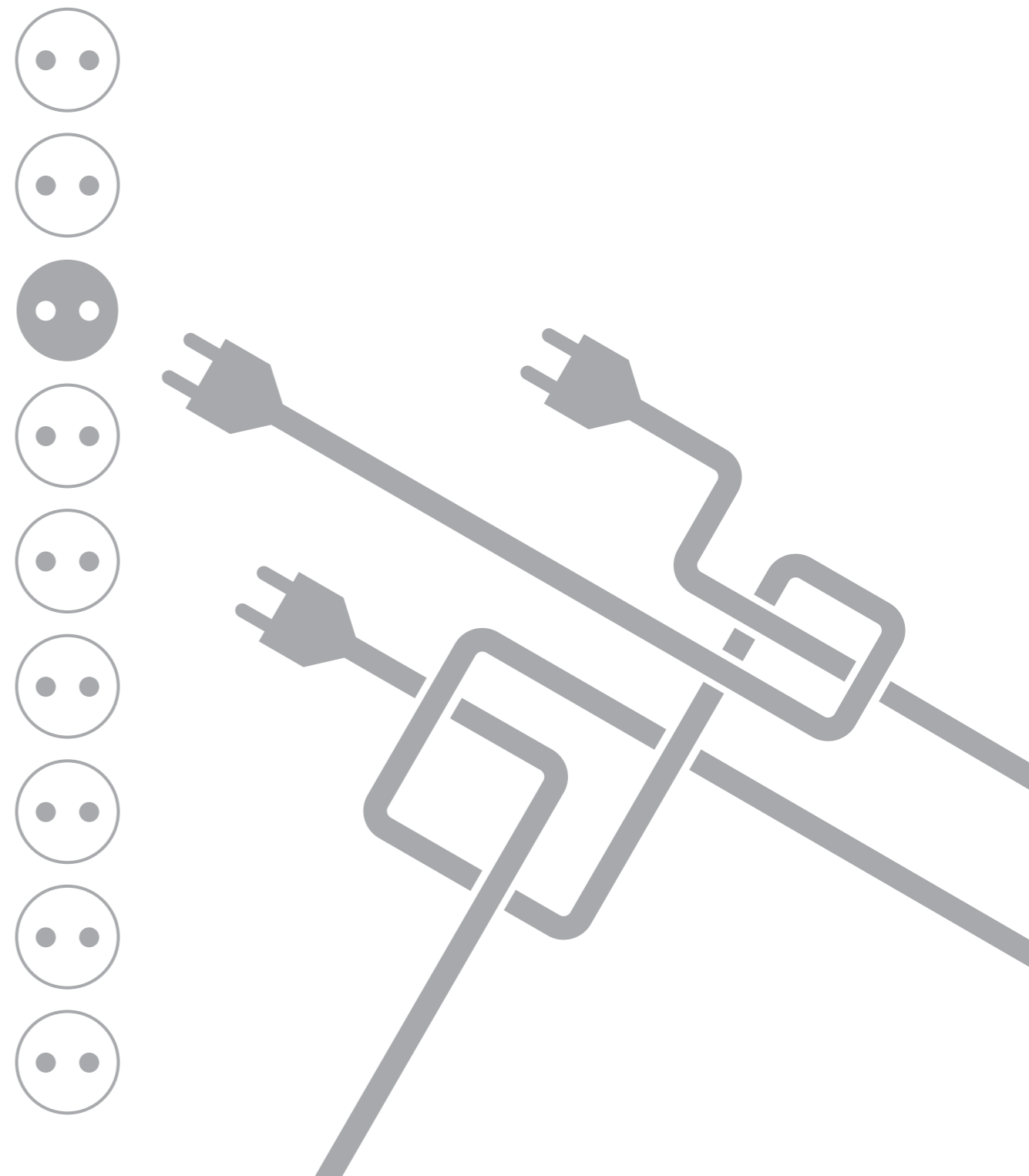
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