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THE ROLE OF ECO-WISE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – RESULTS FROM A RESEARCH PROJECT IN AUSTRIA

Abstract

Over the last few years, the awareness of sustainable development increased. At the same time, ecologically oriented work-integration social enterprises (ECO-WISE) were discovered as organisations accomplishing the major objectives of this strategy (SEC 2005). A research project conducted in Austria considered if and how ECO-WISE are contributing to sustainable development (Anastasiadis and Mayr 2010). In the first part of this article, core results are presented and discussed with the aim to a) make visible ECO-WISE performance as social, economic and ecologically sustainable actors, and b) revise and confirm the conceptual framing outlined in another article in this publication “ECO-WISE: Concept, evolution and research perspectives”. The second part of this article reveals the opportunities and drawbacks that go along with managing and trying to simultaneously reach social, economic and ecological goals. They were identified in the first phase of a participatory follow-up research project that intends to mainstream ECO-WISE as regional sustainable actors.