

As their café training programme comes to a close, the mentally disabled persons involved face an important decision: "What next?" They usually enter a follow-up transit programme, which helps them to deal with the transformation from the café environment to a different one. The objective of this dissertation was to map, understand and gain a deeper view into the process of career choices among mentally disabled people who have made use of the transit programme.

The research group consisted of a group of five subjects who entered the transit programme in 2003 and 2004. Data was collected until the end of 2005 when the transit programme was completed by the last of the five subjects. The data processing procedure was inspired by the qualitative grounded theory of Strauss and Corbin (1999). The data were obtained particularly through active observation and ethnographic interviews with the subjects, and an employee of the transit programme (working consultant).

The process of a career choice is considered to be an issue of professional identity.

All subjects entered the transit programme with a certain idea about their future careers.

We generally speak about a desirable professional identity, represented by jobs which the subjects find attractive for some reason. However, such attractive jobs are often out of reach for them.