

Providing gender cliché-free vocational guidance

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 GERMANY

Timeline



ID number 28129

Background

Women and men continue to align themselves very differently on the training and labour market in Germany. In company-based training, women and men are unequally distributed across the individual training areas. Significant differences between the subjects chosen by young females and males are also revealed at vocational schools and at institutes of higher education. Young people are likely to align their occupational choice decisions to traditional patterns. This means that the career spectrum available to them becomes limited. This causes repercussions at individual, economic and societal levels.

Objectives

The aim of the measure is to inform and network all those involved in career orientation processes to enable young people to choose a career and course of study based on their individual strengths and interests, free from gender stereotypes.

Description

Since December 2016, a dedicated website informs and supports young people in their career choice free from gender clichés; it also serves all actors involved in career guidance processes (schools, parents, companies). Support tools include fact sheets, best practice examples, guidance, working materials, event announcements and news, further links and contacts.

Responsible stakeholders for this initiative on the Federal and Federal State levels are the Ministries of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), the Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Employment Agency. Other partners who are involved in this initiative are companies, trade unions like the Chambers of Skilled Crafts, professional associations, early education institutions, schools, universities, education institutions, scientific institutes and other institutions. The Competence Centre Technology-Diversity-Equal Opportunities e. V. (kompetenz) and the Federal Institute for VET (BIBB) coordinate the initiative through a service centre. It is funded by both the ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and the Federal

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

By end of 2019, more than 230 partners had joined the initiative, so the support network had almost doubled since 2018. The information and support tools had been expanded.

2020 Implementation

In March 2020, the initiative published a four-page position paper on a choice of career and study path free from gender stereotypes.

The service agency of the Klischeefrei initiative will be organising a series of online seminars on the topics of the Klischeefrei initiative from autumn 2020. Diverse target groups are addressed.

2021 Implementation

By March 2021, 318 partners had declared their willingness to take appropriate action in their respective areas of responsibility with the Klischeefrei agreement, so the support network had increased by almost 50%.

The third conference of the *Klischeefrei* initiative was scheduled to take place on 9 March 2021 as an online conference open to all, under the motto *Bye-bye clichés, hello talents*.

In 2021, further activities and publications were initiated both on a national and regional level, such as the project: Course for the crafts: getting (more) girls enthusiastic about crafts, which aims to break down prejudices amongst young women and win them over to crafts professions. The project is being carried out as a model project in some Chamber of Skilled Crafts districts in Bavaria and in the Women in the skilled crafts initiative of the Stuttgart Chamber of Skilled Crafts.

2022 Implementation

In February 2022, the initiative welcomed its 400th partner organisation. During the year, other partners joined the initiative such as the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Commissioner for Data Protection, Freedom of Information and the German Aerospace Industries Association and the German Football Association (DFB) joined the initiative.

The impact studies on both the Girls' Day as well as the Boys' Day initiative by kompetenzz from 2022 confirms positive results. Furthermore, the Girls' Day initiative won the Rudolf Diesel Medal in the category 'Best Innovation Promotion'. Around 120 000 learners took part in the nationwide Girls' Day and Boys' Day in April 2022.

Further activities and publications were also initiated and continued in 2022, both at national and regional level:

- (a) publication of a cliché-free fact sheet on the subject of nursing professions;
- (b) a series of Boys' Day video, where boys and men talk about their everyday working lives in professions where women still predominate, a multilingual touring exhibition of the initiative *Komm, mach MINT* (Come make STEM) provides information about the opportunities and contents of higher education and VET in the STEM fields;
- (c) new edition of 'MINT & SOCIAL for you' 2022 presents training opportunities for young people - free of role clichés;

- (d) publishing of a cliché-free topic dossier on digital competences in the world of work;
- (e) an e-learning course especially for professionals in career guidance provides information on the method 'Cliché-free counselling on occupations'. The is provided by Kompetenzzentrum Technik-Diversity-Chancengleichheit e. V., which is home to the service point of the Initiative Klischeefrei;
- (f) practical online lecture were offered by the service point of the Initiative Klischeefrei on cliché-free career and study choices, which included interesting information on the relationship between gender and career choice as well as on application-related methods for stereotype-free counselling of career and study choices;
- (g) *Initiative Klischeefrei* was presented with a stand at the big education fair didacta 2022 in Cologne.

2023 Implementation

As of February 2023, 475 partner organisations had joined the Cliché Free initiative. The initiative continued to organise numerous events, to develop new tools and publications, to promote networking and to disseminate cliché free career choice, starting with early education until working life. The method sets 'Cliché-free career guidance' and 'Cliché-free through primary school' published in 2022 are used intensively by specialists.

Since Girls'Day's launch in 2001, over 2.2 million girls have taken part in more than 172 000 programmes. Girls'Day achieved new record figures in 2023, with 13 795 activities and 126 245 places for girls. Further, since Boys'Day's launch in 2011, more than 375 000 boys have taken part in more than 62 000 activities. In 2023, 7 849 girls and 1 696 boys took part in the Girls'Day and Boys'Day survey on career and life planning in 2023. The enthusiasm of young people for Girls'Day and Boys'Day continues to be enormous: 95% of participating girls and 94% of participating boys found the 2023 campaign days very good or good.

It is particularly interesting to note that the participants primarily learnt about professions through one-day internships, longer internships and discussions with people who work in the respective occupational fields. Parents also continue to play an important role as a source of information in career guidance. However, the majority of young people would also like vocational orientation to become an integral part of lessons, which emphasises the importance of school as preparation for future working life. Despite the gender stereotypes that still exist in career and study choices, the survey shows that the majority of young people favour an equal division of responsibilities for housework and care work in a partnership. Spending time with the children, for example, is seen as a shared task by both the boys and girls surveyed.

2024 Implementation

Once a year, Girls'Day and Boys'Day offer girls and boys an insight into professions in which women or men are underrepresented. With more than 23 000 programmes nationwide and a total of more than 175 000 places for pupils, Girls'Day and Boys'Day set a new record on 25 April 2024 under the motto 'Here you come! Cliché-free career and study choices for all'.

As of October 2024, more than 650 partner organisations have joined the Cliché Free initiative (the number more than doubled since 2021). The initiative continues to organise numerous events, to develop new tools and publications, to promote networking and to disseminate cliché free career choice, starting with early education until working life, e.g. the new method set 'Cliché-free in the company' developed in 2023 was published in 2024.

Bodies responsible

- Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)

- Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
- Competence Centre Technology-Diversity-Equal Opportunities e. V. (kompetenzz)
- Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)
- Chambers of Skilled Crafts

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Promotion strategies and campaigns for VET and lifelong learning

Lifelong guidance

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Website of Cliché-free Initiative \[Initiative Klischeefrei\]](#)

[Description of the initiative in English](#)

[Girls' Day and Boys' Day: Survey on participants' career and life planning 2023](#)

[Girls' Day initiative \(english\)](#)

[Boys' Day initiative \(english\)](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Expansion and promotion of part-time VET

The amendment to the Vocational Training Act in 2020 (Section 7a BBiG), makes it possible to organise part-time vocational training individually in terms of time.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2024 Implementation

Expanding vocational guidance and support from school until completion of training

Nationwide standard support measures anchored in the Social Code (e.g. SGB III) cover the transition from school to work, for example with various forms of vocational preparation and continuous support during training.

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IVET

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