

Coaching and counseling for apprentices and training companies - Apprenticeship coaching

Description

Apprenticeship coaching in Austria aims to avoid drop outs due to misunderstanding or conflict between apprentices and in company trainers. The latter may also receive coaching or counselling as required, in order to ensure the success of the mediation.

Beneficiaries

- ▶ **Early leavers from education and training**
- ▶ **Learners at risk of early leaving from education and training**
- ▶ **VET students (work-based learning)**

Apprentices who are either at risk of dropping out or have already dropped out. There is no age limit, however, most apprentices are between 16 and 25 years old. At coaching level the measure targets companies that provide apprenticeships to support them in case of problems.

Providers of vocational training who wish to reflect, improve or secure the quality of the apprenticeship training.

Countries

 **Austria**

Education level and sector

- ▶ **Upper secondary education**
- ▶ **Upper secondary vocational education and training (work-based learning)**

Dual Vocational Education and Training (VET) (Apprenticeship) at upper secondary level

Type of policy/initiative

- ▶ **Prevention**
- ▶ **Intervention**

Intervention/prevention

Level of implementation / Scope

National level

National-wide, since autumn 2015

Stage of implementation

On-going

Pilot started in 2010, mainstreamed from October 2015 onwards

Aims of policy/initiative

The measure contains two elements: to coach the apprentice through any pending issues/conflicts related or unrelated to the apprenticeship hindering their chances of success and to coach the provider on any specific issue that might arise.

The following performance goals were set during the pilot project launched in 2012:

1. Raise the successful participation of learners in final apprenticeship exams.
2. Reduce the number of dropouts from apprenticeships.

In addition, impact goals were defined as:

1. The individual and social stabilisation of the apprentice, as to ensure a situation where individual issues, such as housing, health, debts, conflicts or family issues do not hamper the successful participation in apprenticeship.
2. Solving problems related (or not) to the apprenticeship training, which put the successful completion of the apprenticeship at risk.

Features and types of activities implemented

The measure was designed on the youth coaching model by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Economy.

The coaching process is not capped in terms of coaching hours/ phases. Additionally, case management is offered.

Resources

The resources of the measure are considered as sufficient. Moreover, a high political commitment can be observed from Ministries as well as social partners.

Evaluation of the measure

The pilot phase of the measure was accompanied by an evaluation carried out between October 2012 and July 2013. The evaluation was based on monitoring data, provided by the

coaches and coaching providers.

Evidence of effectiveness of the measure

Based on the analysis of the coaching documentation, the evaluation report provides evidence that 77.2% of the apprentices are set "to stay within the dual apprenticeship training system". Other targets were the successful completion of the apprenticeship-leave exam.

According to the evaluation report, 59.3% of participants in the coaching reached their targets. These were set by themselves and the coaches at the beginning of the coaching process. Another 25.9% either partly reached their targets or changed their targets throughout the process and reached them.

According to more recent data, these numbers provide evidence that the dropout from training could have been prevented in most cases.

Interviewees strongly agreed with the data, and consider the measure successful.

Success factors

The following success factors are based on the testimonies of participants in the measure interviewed under the Cedefop study:

1. Commitment of policy makers and stakeholders: the measure was introduced based on a broad commitment of policy makers (Ministries of Economy, Education and Social Affairs and Labour) and stakeholders (Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Labour), who were also involved in designing the measure.
2. Flexible coaching process: the coaching process is based on quality standards, however the coach is very flexible in relation to the methods applied and frequency of coaching. This ensures that the process is tailored to the apprentice's needs. Within the mainstreamed programme flexibility will increase.
3. Cost efficiency: compared to other measures, coaching is not very expensive. The apprentice still participates in a regular apprenticeship and therefore does not need any social support. At the same time, the positive effects on reducing dropouts are considered to be significant.
For target groups (the beneficiaries) coaching is at no charge, available on demand and anonymous (unique features).
4. Qualified coaches: coaches are highly qualified and have competences in many fields, apprenticeship training, psychology and social work. In the mainstreamed programme, the focus on the qualifications of coaches will be on social work in order to develop a close cooperation with other social work and youth work measures.
5. Continuing development of the measure: the measure aims to become a dynamic rather than a static concept. One that can be further developed and tailored to the needs of the apprenticeship system. The aim is to work closely with clients (apprentices and companies) in order to enable the sustainable development of the measure. This is considered positive, as it enables flexibility within the measure.
6. Network with other measures and initiatives: the new programme focuses not only on the coaching process, but also on networking with other measures and initiatives as well as with vocational schools.
7. Coach communicates with all involved: the coach communicates with the relevant stakeholders which enables them to find solutions with all partners involved. This is important as most reasons for dropping out are based on a lack of communication and conflicts, as well as a lack of appreciation from those surrounding the apprentice as well as discrimination.

Contact details for further information

Contact name

Dagmar Zwinz

Contact telephone

+43 5 90 900 3147

Contact website

<http://www.lehre-statt-leere.at>

Contact email

dagmar.zwinz [at] lehrestattleere.at

Related intervention approaches



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