

# BOP: Vocational orientation programme, offered at vocational training centres

*Special focus on BFZ: vocational training centres of the educational institute of the Bavarian Industry and Trade*

## Beneficiaries

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### **VET students (school-based learning)**

All students in Bavaria in the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> year of schooling, especially in secondary schools which do not lead to an academic career.

## Countries

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 **Germany**

## Education level and sector

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-  **Secondary education**
-  **Lower secondary education**
-  **Lower secondary general education**

Lower secondary, general education (as there is not yet a vocational path at the level of the 8th school year).

## Type of policy/initiative

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-  **Prevention**

Preventative

## Level of implementation / Scope

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-  **Provider level**
-  **National level**

The scope of the BOP is national, however the present fiche focuses on the implementation in the Bavarian Employers' Associations (BFZ).

## Stage of implementation

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Mainstream since 2010, first implemented in 2008 (pilot phase 2008-09).

## Aims of policy/initiative

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BOP's goal is to give students an insight into a wide range of professions, avoiding gender stereotypes. It also aims to inform students about their potential in order for them to develop an idea as to which professions might suit them better than others.

## Features and types of activities implemented

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The measure was designed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), who mandated the Federal Institute of Vocational Education (BIBB) with the coordination of the project.

The measure consists of two standardised parts:

- **In-depth analysis of the learner's potential**: 2-day assessment during which students are systematically observed according to their personal, social and methodological skills. After the analysis, a feedback discussion is carried out to which the students' parents are also invited.
- **Two weeks of workshop days**: students receive a questionnaire comprising 125 questions, in order to self-assess their competences. Providers must offer at least five different professional/vocational areas, of which the school classes taking part in the workshop days may choose three areas, depending on the students' interests.

## Resources

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Since 2015, the programme has reached 815,000 students with an allocated budget of €360 million.

Funding has undergone minor changes during the current period, with more funds being allocated to the programme due to increasing demand. From 2016 onwards, BOP providers will receive €150 per student for each analysis of potential, and €300 per student for the workshop days.

## Evaluation of the measure

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Two external evaluations have been conducted and one is ongoing.

The measure was **first evaluated in 2010** by the Institute for Vocational Training, Labour Market and Social policy (INBAS), when it was still in its pilot phase. The evaluation aimed at establishing whether expectations were met and if resources were used effectively. Standardised questionnaires were used for the 1000 students participating in BOP, seeking to gather information on their motivation, influence on professional choices and potential room for improvement. 30 semi-standardised telephone interviews with teachers and trainers from 23 different schools were also conducted.

A subsequent **evaluation in 2013** was aimed at BOP project managers, teachers and trainers. Three surveys were conducted among the above mentioned stakeholders and results were published in 2014.

A **qualitative and quantitative** longitudinal survey of students, institutions and schools was launched in 2013, the results of which **are expected in 2017**.

## Evidence of effectiveness of the measure

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The **2010 evaluation** report shows positive results. **Almost 80%** of students answered that they now know which **professions are not suitable for them** and **more than 60%** stated that they now know **which professions are suitable for them**. The result is partly confirmed by the 2014 report.

The programme is already rolled-out at national level on the basis of the evaluation's positive outcome and is currently being expanded to new types of schools.

## Success factors

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

1. Practical orientation: BOP provides students with "hands-on" insights into at least three different professions over the course of two weeks, and makes them see where their skills can best be put to use. The analysis of learners' potential mainly has a practical focus (7 out of 10 hours at BFZ).
2. Focus on strengths rather than weaknesses: BOP analyses the learners' potential by focusing on strengths rather than weaknesses in order to empower students and give them a different perspective than the one experienced in school, where performance is graded, with a consequent focus on their weaknesses.
3. External setting (outside of school environment): the fact that BOP's analysis of learners' potential (in almost all Länder) and workshop days are offered outside of the school environment and with external trainers and observers, gives students an opportunity to prove who are themselves outside of their "roles" at school. The time outside of school is also highly motivating for students to participate actively and is considered as a "highlight".

## Contact details for further information

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## Related intervention approaches

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**Developing employability skills**



**Guidance: supporting youth to manage their careers**



**Improving VET image and attractiveness**

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