

Capacity building to students, companies and vocational schools involved in apprenticeship-training (QuABB)

Description

The overarching goal is to reduce the number of contract dissolutions, which lead to a permanent drop-out of education and training.

QuABB also aims to support vocational schools as well as companies in working with "high-maintenance" apprentices.

Beneficiaries

 **VET students (work-based learning)**

VET learners (apprenticeship-based) on the verge of ending their apprenticeship prematurely, training companies and VET schools.

Countries

 **Germany**

Education level and sector

 **Upper secondary education**

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

Upper secondary Vocational Education and Training (VET) (apprenticeship based)

Type of policy/initiative

 **Prevention**  **Intervention**

Preventative/Intervention

Level of implementation / Scope

 **Regional level**

Partnership initiative between the States of Hesse, North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony

regional: selected schools in the State of Hessen (pilot phase: 4 regions covered (administrative districts), expanded to 15 regions in 2013). As of 2016, the measure covers all regions in the State of Hessen.

Institutions/courses covered: all fields of dual system vocational training; 116 VET schools.

Stage of implementation

 On-going

Originally introduced in December 2008, the pilot phase originally included four regions and was expanded to 15 in 2013. It has been mainstreamed in Hessen since mid-2015.

Aims of policy/initiative

The overarching goal is to reduce the number of contract dissolutions, which lead to a permanent drop-out of education and training.

QuABB also aims to support vocational schools as well as companies in working with "high-maintenance" apprentices.

Features and types of activities implemented

QuABB provides an opportunity for beneficiaries to talk to qualified guidance counsellors in order to find out the reasons behind their problems at work, school or in their private life, and to develop individual perspectives in order to successfully complete their apprenticeship.

QuABB was developed around three pillars:

- **prevention** - an "early warning system" toolbox has been developed for apprentices and trainers
- **intervention** - counselling is provided to both companies (e.g. conflict management training, working with difficult apprentices) and apprentices (for issues on the workplace, in their private life etc.)
- **networking** - counsellors exchange experiences with each other and other stakeholders

Resources

QuABB had a budget of €10 million for the period from 2009 to 2015. It was financed by ESF funds and Land (federal state) Hessen. It plans to continue the project until 2020 with a budget of €9 million. ESF funds were reduced in order to mainstream the project to all administrative districts only 70% of expenses will be covered by the ministries and ESF, and 30% will be co-financed by the respective schools' and communal budgets.

Evaluation of the measure

QuABB was evaluated externally by "Hessen Agentur" agency during the first years of implementation, which published a final report in 2014.

Questionnaires were prepared for both learners and companies. Interviews with various stakeholders and counsellors were also conducted to gather information on the impact of the measure on the learner's performance.

Evidence of effectiveness of the measure

The evaluation concluded that QuABB had been successful in countering early leaving in VET.

According to the evaluation report, the measure positively influenced the continuation/completion of apprenticeships with more than 60% still in the same apprenticeship after 3 months from the last QuABB intervention and a further 10% successfully finishing their apprenticeship.

Success factors

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

1. Preventative measures (e.g. early warning system toolbox, absenteeism tracking software): targeting those at risk of dropping out before their problems escalate, at a stage where intervention is still possible, is one of the success factors of QuABB. The measures preventing escalation include a toolbox of guidelines and tracking devices (e.g. indicator-sheets for teachers), and a pilot project was launched to test a software tracking absenteeism, which will be widely mainstreamed in the near future.
2. Cooperation of various stakeholders: by involving various stakeholders (VET school teachers, trainers, parents, other social services) into the development and implementation of the project, QuABB has managed to provide more tailored and faster services, and become a successful initiative with a good reputation.
3. Proximity: low-threshold accessibility of QuABB counsellors, who hold office hours directly in the schools and have their offices on school premises makes it easy for students to enter and receive help.
4. Certification of counsellors and training and exchange of experiences for counsellors: in the mainstreaming phase, certification of counsellors will be mandatory and exchange of experience between counsellors will continue to be an important part of quality assurance. By training and certifying counsellors, QuABB is able to offer the highest-quality services and by exchanging experiences between counsellors, it ensures the most efficient ways of problem-solving can be applied throughout the QuABB network.

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Related intervention approaches



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