



QUALIMOVET

National Study Austria

Programmes and modules for socially disadvantaged young people
Examples of good practice in Austria



September 2009



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. BOK AND BOKGASTRO	4
QUALITY DIMENSIONS	5
<i>Dimension 1: Curriculum and competency standards</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Dimension 2: Learning support system and infrastructure</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Dimension 3: Preconditions of the target group.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Dimension 4: Acquisition of competencies</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Dimension 5: Validation of competencies.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Dimension 6: Methods and tools for encouraging learning.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Dimension 7: Recognition of qualifications.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Dimension 8: Employability</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Dimension 9: Methods and tools of social integration</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Dimension 10: Pedagogical personnel.....</i>	<i>16</i>
3. J-U-L-I-A	18
QUALITY DIMENSIONS	18
<i>Dimension 1: Curriculum and competency standards</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Dimension 2: Learning support system and infrastructure</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Dimension 3: Preconditions of the target group.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Dimension 4: Acquisition of competencies</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Dimension 5: Validation of competencies.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Dimension 6: Methods and tools for encouraging learning.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Dimension 7: Recognition of qualifications.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Dimension 8: Employability</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Dimension 9: Methods and tools of social integration</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Dimension 10: Pedagogical personnel.....</i>	<i>26</i>
4. PROGRAMMES FOR THE TARGET GROUP: OVERVIEW AND COMPARISON.....	27
ANOTHER GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE: APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING IN A TRAINING COMPANY	27
EXAMPLES OF INNOVATIVE METHODS IN OTHER PROGRAMMES FOR THE TARGET GROUP	28
COMPARISON OF THE DESCRIBED PROGRAMMES	29

1. Introduction

Two vocational preparation programmes were chosen for the study of quality dimensions:

- BOK and BOKgastro, vocational preparation courses for disadvantaged young people („gastro“ with an emphasis on gastronomy)
- J-u-L-I-A, course on labour market integration for youth and young adult migrants

Both programmes focus on the target group „socially disadvantaged young people with migration background“, as explicated in the austrian prestudy. Within BOK/BOKgastro about 40 to 50 percent of the participants are adolescents with migration background. In J-u-L-I-A, migration background is a precondition for program participation.

The target group is characterized by the necessity of subsequent scholastic qualification and vocational orientation prior to vocational training as shown in the prestudy. Thus, vocational preparation programmes are a chance for this target group to succeed in the labour market. But participation in a vocational preparation programme does not result in an approved leaving exam. Therefore we interviewed another expert, the manager of a training company providing apprenticeship training and give also a short description on this supra-company system in the last chapter.

In the next chapters we describe with which general conditions, methods, instruments and tools the both vocational preparation programmes fulfil the quality dimensions of the matrix. However, not all quality dimensions can be covered, especially because conditions for validation of informally acquired competences are still missing in Austria.

Therefore, insights into innovative methods and tools, which are used in other programmes and projects for this target group, are also given in the last chapter.

Description of the data sources

The following data sources were used for the study:

- written documents (i.e. concept of application and final reports for the funding authorities, website and project folder or project-internal working materials)
- interviews with the project management

The mixture of these data sources leads to a complex idea of the quality standards in the programmes. Educational concepts, methods and tools are presented more precisely in the written documents. In the interviews with the project managers the focus was on the concrete implementation and lived practical experience.

In vocational preparation programmes there is a fundamental agreement in terms of didactics or curricula, i.e. to enable internships in different occupational fields, but peculiarities of the provider organisations determine quality and success in a particular way.

BOK/BOKgastro are managed by a well-established adult education organization. This organization offers various types of courses for a general population, f.e. for learning support.

J-u-L-I-A is a project of the “Wiener Integrationshaus”, the most important information and counselling centre for all questions regarding to migration and asylum.

The interviewed project managers are longstanding experienced experts and they are either active in the programmes or engaged in the target group for years. They have insight into their own programmes as well as into the ongoing discussion and the current status of the “scene”.

2. BOK and BOKgastro

Short description of BOK/BOKgastro

BOK is a vocational preparation programme for disadvantaged young people who don't know for what job to apply. The programme offers the possibility to get to know different occupational fields and places the participants in apprenticeships on the primary labour market subsequently.

BOKgastro developed as a specialization from BOK and addresses to the same target group with the difference that the young people already have chosen gastronomy as their desired occupational field.

Both programmes are organized by "Wiener Volkshochschulen GmbH", an important adult education organization with several regional locations. It is the public mandate of the "Volkshochschule" to prepare low-threshold educational offers for all and especially for disadvantaged groups. The "Volkshochschule Meidling" is the project partner in QualiMoVET and both programmes are located there. Premises of the part-time vocational school of gastronomy are also located there. Thus, existing resources (i.e. teaching staff and school kitchen) can be optimally allocated. BOK/BOKgastro have been running since the mid-nineties and are grant-aided by the federal social welfare office in Vienna.

Target group

Target group of BOK/BOKgastro are young people

- between 15 and 19 years of age,
- with completed compulsory education (not necessarily a successful school leaving qualification),
- with special educational needs and/or other disadvantages,
- group careers information activities which have already started („clearing process“),
- and possible placement prospects in the primary labour market.

Young people with special educational needs show constitutional and/or social caused adverse effects. These effects can be expressed in different ways, i.e. learning problems, low motivation or capacity, disturbed motor function or negative social behaviour.

About 40 to 50 percent of the participants have a migration background.

Aims of BOK/BOKgastro

It is the priority objective that young people can gain ground in the labour market. To do this, it is necessary to find an apprenticeship or a job and be able to maintain subsequently. Furthermore, the participants should be able to meet the demands of a self-consistent and self-determined conduct of life upon the completion of the programme.

Intentions in detail are:

- vocational orientation
- qualification and second-chance qualification
- testing in internships in companies
- outplacement in jobs on the primary labour market
- follow-up support

Course schedule

The courses usually last for one year. It is possible to leave the course by reason of employment (apprenticeship or job) at any time. The supervision relationship will be maintained until the official end of the programme if accompanying measures are still necessary.

Pre-selection for course attendance is followed by an initial phase, where group formation, clarification of previous existing learning experiences and necessary initial requirements are discussed and a job profile is created. After that qualification and practical phases alternately take place and these phases are used for determination and examination of the particular professional objective and for promotion of general and specific vocational skills and competencies. During the last two phases the participants are outplaced and then they are supervised for one more year.

Quality dimensions

Dimension 1: Curriculum and competency standards

Are there any specific conditions of the curriculum and didactics?

BOK/BOKgastro are characterized by the following specific conditions in curriculum and didactics:

- orientation on competencies and resources
- a maximum degree of individualization
- model „workplace-related qualification“

For a detailed description of the specific conditions mentioned above please see the relevant quality dimensions.

In Austria you have to meet certain prerequisites to receive subsidies from funding authorities. The funding authority federal social welfare office does not presume general quality criteria for the application. But a new application has to be submitted every year before starting a new class containing a detailed description of the curriculum and the used methods. Qualification and suitability of the trainers and supervisors have to be applied also. Then the federal social welfare office decides on basis of this yearly application about the continuation of funding the programmes.

Is access to the programme flexible/open?

The programmes are generally open for the target group. Information events are held for young people as well as for the parents. There is also a taster cooking for interested young people in the programme BOKgastro. Sometimes members of the target group are passed on from public employment service and from other counselling and information centres.

The funding authority of BOK/BOKgastro, federal social welfare office Vienna, specifies a clearing report for the definite participation in the programmes. Clearing takes place in so-called clearing centres, constitutions assigned by the federal social welfare office providing a special service for young people with special educational needs, socio-emotional disadvantages and disability at the transition from school to working life. It is the aim to refer on professional options and to create circumstances that allow the adolescents to make realistic decisions concerning their vocational future. In discussions with the persons concerned, parents und teachers, individual interests, skills and competencies are filtered out, different jobs and their requirements can be experienced (by means of practical courses), information about vocational training and schools, jobs, courses and projects are passed on and a personal career and development plan and a clearing report is provided.

In addition to that clearing report potential participants of BOK/BOKgastro have to document their disadvantages by means of indications, expertises, certifications etc.

Only young people with interest in working in the gastronomy can participate in BOKgastro. Therefore the result of the preceding vocational orientation process within the clearing should be a desired apprenticeship or an employment as an assistant in the gastronomy area. But the vocational orientation process can be finished in the project itself, for example changing the skilled trade from cook to restaurant specialist.

For both programmes the completion of the compulsory education, i.e. nine school years, is an additional prerequisite.

BOK/BOKgastro do have internal admission procedures (see below) which decide for final participation. In addition to the written report, which has to be submitted to the funding authority federal social welfare office, informal meetings are held with responsible counsellors of the clearing centre and the specific problems of the young people are discussed. To obtain a more detailed picture of the individual initial situation talks are held with the interested young people themselves as well as with their parents.

Is the curriculum competence-oriented/ competence-based?

BOK/BOKgastro do follow a competence and resource orientation in this sense: it is not essential to uncover weaknesses but to handle problems on bases of existing developmental potentials to reach compensation. Young people should get to know their strength und competences and bring them in. The insight into own restrictions and handicaps and associated with this the advancement of a realistic vocational objective is an important step for further successful occupational integration.

For that purpose, BOK/BOKgastro is working with the model of workplace-related qualification. This model is orientated to the current status of competences of the participant, is related to concrete situations and is focused on concrete internships or apprenticeships. The young are going to be qualified for a certain existing internship or apprenticeship, i.e. requirements of this concrete job opportunity and individual premises of the participant are compared. Attention is paid to: competencies that are dispensable, competencies that could be replaced or compensated by others and what has to be trained by all means.

On this basis, the qualification measures of the programme are adapted to the individual necessities and as far as possible measures are taken to reorganize the concrete workplace according to the young people competences respectively.

An example: A company wants to take over a participant into an apprenticeship training after an internship but for that purpose spelling proficiencies are too poor, then clear objectives are formulated with the young concerned and special trainings, like individual coaching in German language or individual learning support, are enabled to meet the requirements of the potential company providing the apprenticeship.

Does the curriculum ensure the development of

a) key competencies?

BOK/BOKgastro are focused on the advancement of general key competences and social and technical skills. For the target group it is essential to get to know and to practise basic requirements of occupational activities like accuracy and reliability and to understand and to follow instructions in the workplace.

Therefore course topics include

- advancement of cultural techniques,
- cognitive special training,
- personality development,
- acquisition of social competences and
- increase of personal expressiveness.

Preparation for the leaving exam of general secondary school (up to three disciplines taught) is also possible in the BOK/BOKgastro programmes.

b) vocational competencies?

Above all, participants of BOK/BOKgastro acquire general professional skills like key competences and soft skills, which are preliminary for the access to a skilled trade. It implies e.g. accuracy, reliability and compliance of instructions. These competences are mainly trained in the disciplines communication and personality development but also in internships in companys.

Occupation-specific competences are learned in internships. Participants get to know specific requirements of different skilled trades and they are able to try out typical activities.

- Practical testing in all skilled trades is possible in BOK. The adolescent learn to handle simple occupational competences like to sort and put away products typically in the retail trade services or washing hair as a hair dresser.

- In BOKgastro, the learning of occupation-specific competences is concentrated on the requirements of apprenticeships in gastronomy, e.g. clean and tidy cutting of vegetables or strict observance of different steps during cooking.

Participants acquire schooling competences within second-chance qualification and in preparation for part-time vocational school in the disciplines German, arithmetic and English. They are learning the educational content of the first two semester of the part-time vocational school using the respective books during theoretical class. In BOKgastro also contents of "Fachkunde" (practical training for the respective apprenticeship trade taking place in workshops and laboratories) are trained, i.e. young people are exercising practical activities in the kitchen of the part-time vocational school with school teachers.

Do the programmes allow flexibility concerning

c) the demands, b) the competencies and c) the interests of the individual?

A special condition of BOK/BOKgastro is an individualisation to the greatest possible extent in the planning of the courses. Contents are orientated towards individual learning preconditions and learning requirements of every single participant. Implementation is realized within an individualised procedure and flexible curricula.

An individual training plan is created for each participant. This requires a well-functioning information system between teachers and pedagogical experts or supervisors both informal and on the basis of an elaborate electronically case documentation system (for a detailed description see dimension 2 "Learning support system").

Teaching units are held in small groups or if necessary with individual participants. Each participant gets individual tasks in arithmetic and "German and communications" refer to individual previous knowledge and to the necessary specific training for fulfilling the requirements of concrete internships or apprenticeships.

This concept requires very intensive support and realisation is made possible by trainees from pedagogical and psychological university courses, i.e. trainees partially support individual participants.

The curricula of BOK/BOKgastro follow a phase model on the basis of the individual prerequisites of the participants. This enables a repeated revision of the particular career aspiration, whereas in BOK all occupational fields are up to the participants and in BOKgastro only skilled trades in the gastronomy area can be attempted.

These following phases are changing during the course procedure:

- pre-selection and initial phase
- qualification phase I
- practical training phase I
- qualification phase II
- practical training phase II
- conciliation phase
- follow-up contacts

In BOKgastro the practical training phase I is followed by a checking phase, i.e. the professional objective is verified by means of a detailed evaluation of the internship and a subsequent finalisation of the career aspiration. In case of need, a practical training phase II follows immediately if another skilled trade will be tested and afterwards the next qualification (qualification phase II).

d) the connectivity of programmes or modules?

At the end of the programmes BOK/BOKgastro the participants are outplaced on apprenticeships in the primary labour market, where they receive their regular vocational trainings.

Sometimes the outplacement procedure leads to an apprenticeship within the integrated vocational training scheme (in most of the cases in the form of an extended apprenticeship), where career training assistance is compulsory.

If it is not possible to place the participants in an apprenticeship or workplace other future prospects are developed. Following BOK/BOKgastro 10 to 20 percent of the participants are placed in further training courses or second-chance qualification programmes. This step must be justified in each case. The main reason for such a decision is the chance to extend the preparation time for the participants concerned. BOK/BOKgastro are school orientated programmes, i.e. the focus of second-chance qualifications is on the compensation of school-based deficiencies.

Therefore, if an intensive training of professional competences is necessary previous to the integration into a working place, participants are sent to other programmes, e.g. vocational preparation programme „Jobfabrik¹“, where the focus is on vocational training.

In the case of psychiatric diagnosis of the participants, if another form of supervision is necessary, e.g. if flare-ups of the disease appear during the project, the participants are placed in the programmes „WUKnextlevel²“ or „BIKU³“, which are tailored to this special needs.

e) partial and full qualifications?

The contents of the curricula in the programmes BOK/BOKgastro are professional orientation, career options and second-chance qualification.

Within the second-chance qualification it is possible to make up for the leaving exam of general secondary school in up to three disciplines taught.

Furthermore the participants are prepared for the first year in the part-time vocational school and they partly acquire first educational qualifications. The trainers are teaching with schoolbooks of the part-time vocational school. In BOKgastro occupation-specific requirements are practiced with the help of the responsible part-time vocational school teachers, among others in the part-time vocational school kitchen.

Participants older than 18 years are enabled to gain a forklift permit. This education has to be made during the follow-up contact rather than during the regular course. This qualification is frequently demanded by companies in the case of a take-over into a job. The qualification can be financed within BOK.

Is the curriculum work-process orientated?

As mentioned above the qualification in BOK/BOKgastro is according to the model “workplace-related qualification”. The curricula are focused on the one hand on educational second-chance qualification and on the other hand on testing at a company. The change of qualification and testing within the different project phases is based on the individual working progress of the participants.

Which forms/methods of evaluation are used to measure

a) output requirements?

The funding authority specifies a placement rate of 50 percent on apprenticeships or jobs for participants for BOK/BOKgastro. Accordingly, the placement rate is evaluated for each course differentiated

- in employment relationships (mainly apprenticeship or job),
- in additional schoolings or
- in assisted employment,
- as well as terminations of employment relationships.

The outplacement rates are listed in the annual final reports and a detailed case report is made.

b) the acquisition of competencies?

Trainees of the University of Vienna from pedagogical or psychological departments sometimes carry out small evaluations (e.g. “Are the participants of BOK/BOKgastro well prepared for part-time vocational school?”).

Furthermore, the number of successfully completed leaving exams of general secondary school is an indicator for the acquisition of competences of the participants in the context of second-chance qualification.

c) the competencies and applicability of the pedagogical personnel?

Staff appraisals are held at regular intervals.

On the “customer side” cooperating companies are questioned by letter about their satisfaction regarding cooperation.

¹ see description of „Jobfabrik“ http://www.beschaefigung.volkshilfe.at/3jobfabrik/documents/jobfabrik-folder_070522_final.pdf

² see homepage of the programme <http://www.nextlevel.wuk.at/>

³ see homepage of the programme <http://www.bikutreff.at/erwachsene/willkommen.html>

During the last project period in 2008 a concept for „cooperative classroom observation“ was developed. This concept is used for internal pedagogical evaluation of the lessons and it serves for quality assurance. Within this quality assurance the trainers sit in on courses of colleagues and provide feedback on their lessons.

Dimension 2: Learning support system and infrastructure

Is there any counselling provided before students enter the programme/module?

In the run-up to a participation in BOK/BOKgastro information events are held at the programme location for parents and in schools for teacher. Cooking taster events for young people interested in a job in the gastronomy take place in seminar rooms of BOKgastro. These events offer a free-of-charge option for an assessment of inclinations and interests. Short consultations with members of staff of BOK and BOKgastro take place within these information events.

The actual counselling in the run-up is covered by the clearing organisations, which handle the clearing procedure as already mentioned above. In Vienna, there are nine different contact points available for clearing procedures, e.g. WUK, project LEB or WITAF⁴. The clearing process takes up to six months and comprises regular counselling interviews (mostly every two weeks). All results are collected in a clearing map and lead to the development of a individual career plan. Some young are subsequently placed in apprenticeships within the integrative training system, some of them in vocational training programmes (like BOK and BOKgastro) and others in apprenticeships or jobs on the primary labour market accompanied by a compulsory vocational training assistance.

An existing clearing report is in any case a prerequisite for the participation in the projects BOK and BOKgastro. This ensures that a first counselling with respect to possible professional options has already taken place and that participants integrate faster in the programmes.

Is there to clear the situation of the target group/individual before introducing a programme or module? (something like assistance, e.g. if there are family, drug etc. problems)

Within the clearing process the individual situation of the young people is examined and it also will be made clear, if there are any other handicaps like drug addiction or family problems or debts beside the impairment. In case of need young people are sent to specialized counselling institutions, e.g. credit counselling or the office of youth and family in Vienna. Contacts between BOK/BOKgastro and counselling institutions exist, but in general case specific problems of participants are being clarified in the run-up of the courses.

Does the possibility exist to embrace/rely on the culture/environment of the individual?

The intensive involvement with the environmental and cultural background of every single participant by the supervisors is made possible through the individual education plan, as already mentioned above, and this involvement facilitates the arrangement of social competences.

As a result of the high percentage of participants with migration background (40 to 50 percent) the question of the cultural identity is mostly discussed together at group works. These discussions are caused by the appearance of ethnic conflicts. If necessary, project days with the themes “racism” or “otherness” are organised with the help of specialized counselling institutions.

Is any assistance provided for the target group/individual to reveal if they have entrance problems before starting the programme or module? (e.g. language problems)

Language barriers are no grounds for exclusion, a “DaZ-promotion” (German as second language) is integrated in the project.

Participants with illiteracy constitute are an exception, because it is not easy to manage such a basic second-chance qualification within one year and various disabilities often occur simultaneously.

⁴ for detailed information look at following websites www.faktori.wuk.at, www.dominio.wuk.at, www.projekt-leb.at, www.witaf.at

In the case of delayed development young people are not assigned to BOK/BOKgastro by clearing centers, but they are assigned to job coachings at workshops or apprenticeship trainings in training companys. The priority objective of BOK/BOKgastro is "integration in the primary labour market", thus the participants do have to meet certain requirements.

Is the target group involved in decision making about the programme? (e.g. necessary support)

The participants are not really involved in fundamental decision making about the programme, but the configuration of the subjects are regularly coordinated between the trainers and the participants. The timetable is created according to the individual requirements and can be flexibly adapted during the course procedure (as mentioned above within the model of an individual training plan). In this sense, the participants are indirectly involved in decision making.

Is the programme accessible for the target group/individual? (e.g. Are local factors taken into consideration?)

The location of BOK/BOKgastro is embedded into the infrastructure of the providing organisation, the "Volkshochschule Meidling" and the premises are situated beside the part-time vocational school Längenfeldgasse, authorized for the theoretical training for all skilled trades in gastronomy and in retail trade services specializing in food and textiles.

Premises have barrier-free access und are easily accessible by public transport.

The district Meidling is inhabited by many families and persons with migration background and these often have to be considered as rather educationally disadvantaged. There are some secondary schools in the surrounding area, services for kids and young people in the playing grounds and parks and some general offers for immigrants ("Learning German in the park") as well. Information about BOK/BOKgastro and, as a result, interest in participation in the programmes often runs via these informal channels.

Is any assistance provided to remove psychological barriers of learning?

A good portion of participants made frustrating learning experiences because in the Austrian school system a selection on basis of deficiencies is made very early. Furthermore, no learning assistance is provided by the family, parents frequently have to be considered less educated.

Thus, no ex-cathedra teaching is applied in the programmes BOK/BOKgastro. Individual learning types are identified in the beginning and as a method „Learning with all senses“ is used, i.e. the most suitable sensory channel is determined, e.g. learning by hearing and writing or learning in combination with motion. Moreover, playful learning methods are used to overcome fears.

Targeted support is offered in the case of fear of school and an intensive preparation is made e.g. for admission tests for apprenticeships.

Is any individualized pedagogical assistance/guidance/support provided for the target group/individual? (e.g. coaching, advice)

BOK/BOKgastro are working with a system, where one pedagogical expert is responsible for one participant. One-to-one talks are held with this "relationship counsellor" regularly once or twice a month or even more often on demand.

As mentioned above, individual training plans do exist, which are registered in a case documentation system. Basis for the development of individual training plans are

- one-to-one talks with the pedagogical expert,
- individual agreements about the learning objectives,
- observations and feedback during the courses by the pedagogical experts and during the internships by the person responsible in the cooperating company,
- group meetings and one-to-one talks with parents or with the person having parental responsibility,
- selective psychological tests,

- pedagogical evaluation process for determination of selective achievement deficits,
- regular team meetings concerning case reviews.

An individual training for admission tests or interviews in companies is made during the conciliation phase.

Further individual services are always provided after consultation with parents, companies etc. Such a service can be e.g. provision of psychotherapy in the seminar rooms or escorting a functional illiterate person who is not able to use any public transport on its own.

Dimension 3: Preconditions of the target group

Do selection procedures for the target group exist before the start of the programme or module, e.g. analysis of competencies? If yes, is the selection subject-oriented?

Selection procedures are mainly focused on the evaluation of the performance of the interested young people and not on the analyses of competences. As mentioned above, a clearing process takes place before attending the programmes BOK/BOKgastro. During these clearing process, theoretical or psychological tests may also be used to assess the particular disabilities, e.g. developmental delay or social noticeable problems.

After the clearing process, potentially interested adolescents have to pass an internally admission test for BOK/BOKgastro. This one includes a psychological test (currently: basal intelligence test). Furthermore, the young people have to complete a spreadsheet with their interests, ideas and expectations of the course. The last part is a self-presentation via video camera.

In the admission test for BOKgastro is a subject-oriented part in the kitchen of the part-time vocational school under supervision of a school teacher included. Since the drop-out rates are very high in apprenticeships in the occupational field gastronomy the young people have to proof dexterity and implementation competence. Self-organisation, some level of cleanliness and the understanding of instructions are tested. Practice shows strengths and weaknesses and the respective stress resistance. About 20 percent of the interested young people fail the admission test for BOKgastro, whereas 60 percent of the emphases fall upon practice and 40 percent upon theory. The final decision about the admittance is made by the whole team.

Do associated programmes for parents (or other family members) exist?

Intensive attendance of parents is an essential part of the social pedagogical concept of BOK/BOKgastro. It takes place in the form of event-driven one-to-one-talks, e.g. during occupational orientation phase, or in the form of theme evenings within a group. The cooperation with the parents is, as already mentioned, part of the development of the individual training plans.

During the last years a new challenge has risen for BOK/BOKgastro in the cooperation with parents: On the one hand there are more parents who act very protecting and who do not support the process of detachment, on the other hand parents especially of young people with migration background cannot even be reached. For problem solving more one-to-one talks with parents and information evenings in association with an interpreter were held.

Educational counselling through external experts is organised in the case of need and can be utilised in the premises of BOK/BOKgastro.

Are the members of the target group functional (il)literate? Have the members of the target group the basic skills (writing, reading, arithmetic)?

Participants have to have finished compulsory education (ninth school year) but they do not need a positive leaving exam. Many of them have already had special educational needs in one or more disciplines. In principle the participants have basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. As a rule, functional illiterate persons are not accepted. It was seen during the last courses, that the educational level is considerably decreasing and the needs for second-chance qualification are increasing. Therefore, skills of German and English language and arithmetic are analysed very properly by means of individual task formulations and the results are considered in the development of individual training plans.

Have the members of the target group IT skills/competencies (e.g. to be engaged in E-learning programmes)?

A good portion of the participants has basic IT-skills, i.e. they are able to make enquiries in the web or send E-mails. IT-skills are not required for course attendance. Personal computers are mostly used as equipment in German lessons.

Dimension 4: Acquisition of competencies

What competencies can be acquired during the programme or module? If yes, what specific methods are used?

Participants acquire generally occupational and occupation-specific competences (see above described under quality dimension 1).

The method of “workplace-related qualification”, the model with changing phases of placing and qualification and the individual training plans are applied for the acquisition of competencies.

Is it possible to develop vocational competencies by completing this programme or module? If yes, what specific methods are used?

See above.

Dimension 5: Validation of competencies

Are competencies recognized/validated on the basis of how they are formed? Are they tested in a valid and objective form?

Participants acquire their competences during the theoretical lessons and the internships in the companies. Individually concluded learning objectives in the theoretical subjects are validated three times a year by means of manageable worksheets. Great importance is attached to a testing atmosphere free of fear.

Validation of occupational competences takes place during the placing monitoring, i.e. talks are held with the persons responsible in the cooperating companies. An objective instrument (questionnaire) is used for all participants for this purpose. The aim is an evaluation of the participants performances in the internships according to their individual career aspirations. Analysis of the talks with the company representatives, individual progress and necessary qualifications are registered in the case documentation system. Internship reflections are also carried out with the participants and these reflections refer to the individual career development process. Self-perception and perception by the others are clarified and further learning objectives and other possible internships are defined.

The individual appropriateness is an important criterion in the validation of competences. At the beginning of the project the young people have certain career aspirations for which they do not have the appropriate premises or they do have unrealistic visions with respect to the requirements. The first internship can be done, if possible, in a company of the desired occupational field. As a result, the young people find out in practical activities that their career aspiration cannot be realised and then they are looking for alternatives together with their pedagogical experts. For the participants it is an essential learning step during this process of building up and validating competences to gain insight into their weaknesses and to experience the formulation of realistic visions according to their competences as a motivating procedure.

Are special tools used to recognize/validate informally or non-formally acquired competencies? Who (what kind of organisation) recognizes/validates informally or non-formally acquired competencies and how?

Validation is carried out as described above using a questionnaire for the internships and feedback talks are held with the company representatives. Informally acquired competences are “translated” often in terms of strengths and weaknesses, but the questionnaire used for the evaluation of the internships is competence oriented.

As already mentioned in the introduction, the institutional framework for an official acceptance and validation of informally acquired competences, respectively, is still missing in Austria.

Dimension 6: Methods and tools for encouraging learning

Is counselling provided through the programme or module?

The so-called “relation-ship counselling system” is applied in BOK/BOKgastro (see quality dimension 2), i.e. a relation-ship counselor is available for counselling interviews for each participant during the whole programme. Participants are also referred to other counselling institutes in case of special problems.

Do individuals learning pathways exist? If yes, what kind and how are they structured?

See mentioned before “individual training plan”.

Do practice-based methods (e.g. workplace-based learning, project work) exist?

See described before “workplace-related qualification”.

The theoretical training will be supplemented by a video project in BOK. It is the aim of the project to promote expression, communication skills and to show the own impairment. The camera is working as an observing eye. The young people are developing screenplays and they are practising their social competences.

Is reflection on the learning process encouraged? If yes, in what way?

The reflection takes place in the system of the above mentioned relation-ship counselling and within the individual training plans.

Dimension 7: Recognition of qualifications

Are modules connected to develop vocational competencies?

After the programmes BOK/BOKgastro the participants should complete an apprenticeship training with successfully passing the apprenticeship leaving exam. That’s where they develop the vocational competencies for a skilled trade. Some of the young people are outplaced to an apprenticeship training in a supra-company training institution. But they also should finish with an apprenticeship leaving exam (most of them one year later as in the regular system – the so called extended apprenticeship). Only some don’t succeed and finish with a certificate confirming partial vocational skills (the so called integrated vocational training scheme).

Only few persons that cannot be introduced to a vocational education are sent to a literacy programme.

For older participants (above 18 years of age) it is possible to gain a forklift permit as an additional qualification during the follow-up contacts.

Does the programme or do the modules aim for the development of vocational competencies?

BOK/BOKgastro are vocational preparation programmes and they do not especially aim for the development of vocational competencies. Aims of both programmes are the development of independence, the ability to a living on their own, the strengthening of soft skills and the encouragement for lifelong learning. With this objective in mind, general vocational competencies are gained.

Is it possible to get to know different workplaces during the placement?

During the year of the course participants have to pass two to three internships in different companies to get to know different work cultures but also different workplaces and work activities.

In the occupational field “system gastronomy” in BOKgastro the participants are usually staying at one company and changing their workplaces within this single company several times.

Does the possibility exist to get a certificate from the companies on the basis of the placement?

Companies do write internship certificates if necessary.

Does cooperation with other institutions/providers of similar programmes or modules exist?

There is an institutionalised networking of all youth projects in Vienna. A meeting takes place once a quarter where the projects (about 20 project manager) exchange information.

BOK is planning co-operations with two other youth projects (“Prima Donna” and “Jugend am Werk”). BOKgastro is already co-operating with part-time vocational school of gastronomy. It is intended to use the resources of the school staff not only in the subject “cooking” but also in “restaurant services”.

Dimension 8: Employability

How are regional labour market demands taken into consideration when introducing a programme or module? Are the demands of the regional labour market satisfied?

BOK/BOKgastro are feedback-oriented, i.e. considerations of the demands of the regional labour markets are integrated into the program concept but they are not the basis. One example in this context: Many boys want to become automobile mechanics but since there are no apprenticeships in this occupational field they have to look for alternatives. The situation on the regional labour market cannot be ignored in this case.

Do any partnerships with companies exist to realize/help the transition from learning to working?

Placements in companies are an essential part of the curriculum of BOK/BOKgastro.

Companies have to be newly acquired for each course, especially for the arrangement of apprenticeships. Partnerships do not only exist with companies that are looking for and admitting apprentices, BOKgastro also co-operates with a restaurant chain regularly offering internships but with no need for apprentices.

Is there any assistance provided to help finding a job (e.g. job centers)?

The real conciliation phase (the last four month) follows after the last internship phase. But outplacement support is part of the curricula right from the start of the course, among all in the discipline vocational orientation or in the relation-ship counseling. Outplacement is the challenge of the relation ship counsellor, who supports the participants in creating application papers and in preparation for job interviews or entrance tests.

Application and outplacement support is continued in the follow-up counselling for participants without a successful outplacement at the end of the course. Often alternatives to the existing career aspiration are considered and developed.

Does counselling exist after the end of the programme or module?

The aftercare counselling phase starts at the end of the course and the counselling can be taken in advantage for one more year. Aftercare counsellors are responsible and they offer outplacement support, second-chance qualifications and learning support and measures to maintain the actual apprenticeships in companies.

In addition to this internal aftercare counselling in BOK/BOKgastro, services within the vocational integration scheme⁵ are provided which are open to all persons with disabilities, i.e. job assistance, job coaching and career training assistance. Job assistance supports job search and integration or if problems occur at the working place. The aims of job coaching are the lasting maintenance of employment, close co-operations with public authorities and counselling services, attendance and information. Career training assistance⁶ accompanies young people during the integrative apprenticeship, keeps in contact with companies providing training and with part-time vocational schools, organises learning support if necessary or conciliates financial support to companies providing training.

⁵ see services described on the following website <http://www.dabei-austria.at/index.php/seite/158>. These services include job assistance, job coaching, clearing, personal assistance and career training assistance.

⁶ See description of career training assistance <http://www.dabei-austria.at/index.php/seite/158>

Does follow-up exist after the programme or module?

There are meetings of former participants/graduates but no follow-up in the sense of a new qualification or acquisition of competences.

Do co-operations with companies exist? a) If yes, how is this organized? b) Are companies anyhow rewarded for their willingness for cooperation or workplace provision?

As mentioned above there are companies, which regularly provide internships, and others, which take over participants into apprenticeships.

There are special staff members responsible for the contact with the companies and they document all contacts in a separate data base. Company contacts are very personally and have therefore to be cultivated very carefully.

The motives of the companies to co-operate with BOK/BOKgastro are very different. On the one hand they are looking for “cheap” employees and on the other hand their commitment is based on their social responsibility. The companies receive some attention in public also, e.g. success stories are published on the BOK website or stories are publicised in the regional newspapers.

Furthermore, the companies receive multiple financial supports for the acceptance of apprentices. The model of “workplace-related qualification” ensures on the one hand reduction of training costs because young people are well-prepared for concrete apprenticeships and on the other hand follow-up costs due to problems or conflicts are low because the young people receive follow-up support.

Dimension 9: Methods and tools of social integration

Is the certificate at the end of the programme or module recognised by a) the companies or b) the society?

The programme certificate is not really recognised and is therefore of little importance. However, the internship certificates are accepted as proofs of competencies in the application process by other companies.

Does vocational/occupational mobility and cross company flexibility exist?

The participants mostly start BOK/BOKgastro with very unrealistic visions of occupational fields and their requirements. First internships are followed by intensive vocational guidance und reorientation. The formulation of realistic aims can be interpreted as a progress in relation to occupational mobility.

Cross company flexibility is guaranteed by internships in different companies.

In the programmes, the participants are encouraged to organise themselves and they are supported to fulfil the requirements of a self-consistent and self-determined conduct of life. That includes continuation of employment in the company providing the apprenticeship or to find a new job upon completion of the vocational training. Thus it can be spoken of some kind of mobility and flexibility.

Does an advancement of vocational mobility and flexibility of the target group/individual exist after programme/module completion?

For a target group threatened with exclusion from the labour market it is advantageous to get an apprenticeship and to pass a vocational education after completion of BOK/BOKgastro.

Is it possible to find a job for the target group/individual providing employment for a longer period of time?

The social welfare office as the funding authority specifies that it has to be proved three months after follow-up contacts whether a socially insured employment exists or not. Longer periods of time are not audited and thus no data are available about long-term employments of the participants. As mentioned above there are meetings of former participants/graduates on a voluntary basis. Sometimes long-term information about participants is available on informal basis because the companies employing them are constant co-operation partners.

In 2008, seven out of eight participants of BOKgastro were successfully placed (five of them in an apprenticeship in the primary labour market). Fifteen young persons took part in BOK. Four of them had to be suspended and seven of the remaining eleven participants were placed in an apprenticeship on the primary labour market.

In which sectors are members of the target group mainly employed?

Sectors of BOK are

- retail trade services
- handicrafts (joinery, plumbing technician, bricklayer, tinsmith, painter, hairdresser)
- medical services (pharmaceutical trade assistant, dental assistant)

Participants of BOKgastro are placed in apprenticeships in gastronomy, e.g. system gastronomy expert, cook or restaurant specialist.

Dimension 10: Pedagogical personnel

What special qualifications do have those dealing with the target group?

The members of staff form a multi-professional team of educators, psychologists, teachers and social workers and many of them have degrees/graduations from university. Some of them completed additional vocational trainings as educational advisers, pedagogical experts or therapists.

What special competencies are needed to work with the target group (e.g. minority cultural)?

Two colleagues are integration commissioners and they are responsible for questions in connection with working permissions and other legal problems associated with foreign employment. One colleague speaks Croatian, the mother tongue of many participants.

Empathy and understanding for the everyday life of adolescents and especially of the target group of socially disadvantaged young people are the most needed important competencies for colleagues and they do have them because they have been working for BOK/BOKgastro and in other programmes for the target group already for many years.

Where and how are these competencies developed? How are they trained to be able to deal with the target group? How and how frequently is the further training organised?

The colleagues have adequate education/training. Many of them have been acting in the projects for years and they have professionalized the treatment of the target group in the “training on the job”.

Case discussions are held in regular team meetings, interventions and supervisions.

A budget for further education is available for each colleague per year. This can also be used for individual coaching in case of need.

Is the personal appropriateness of the pedagogical personnel validated? If yes, how is this done?

Personnel selection is carried out in personal job-interviews held by two staff members. The personal appropriateness is checked by means of a case example, which has to be solved by the applicants. The final decision is discussed in a team meeting.

Is the pedagogical personnel involved in target group relevant decisions? If yes, how is this done?

The colleagues are involved in decision-making within the scope of ongoing team meetings and also in seclusions, which are taking place twice a year.

Is any special encouragement for the pedagogical personnel provided? If yes, in what form?

There are top-down feedbacks with all employees once a year.

Furthermore, case supervisions are made in the respective project teams (BOK, BOKgastro and follow-up support) bimonthly. A team-overlapping supervision is additionally made monthly. Intervisions are made in the respective team if necessary.

The colleagues are characterised by a special form of personal engagement. Mostly, they are engaged in the “scene” for a long time and they do know the problems and requirements of their target group very well. The success, they gain with “their” young people, is their real motivation.

3. J-u-L-I-A

The programme J-u-L-I-A is a vocational preparation programme as well, which is focused on the target group of young people with migration background or refugees. The aim is integration in apprenticeships in the primary labour market.

J-u-L-I-A is designed in a modular form and is integrated in an overall network of services („Netzwerk Dynamo“) for this target group (for a detailed description see dimension 1: Curriculum and competency standards).

Short description of J-u-L-I-A

Provider of the programme J-u-L-I-A is the “Integrationshaus Wien”⁷, the most important contact point for refugees and persons seeking asylum, which was founded in the early nineties as an alternative to the public refugee welfare work. Besides accommodation various advisory and support projects are offered to refugees, e.g. to begin with psychological support of war trauma, language courses, an intercultural kindergarten up to projects of integration into the labour market such as J-u-L-I-A.

Funding authority of the programme J-u-L-I-A is the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture (BMUKK). The programme started two years ago.

Course content

- vocational guidance (application training, social skills, development of the individual personality)
- psychosocial care and support, i.e. one hour of individual counselling talks per participant monthly

The course lasts for one year. The number of participants can change because the entrance into a course during the year in progress is possible under certain conditions (some participants only need outplacement support but no occupational orientation).

The course is divided into three phases:

- At the beginning there is a five-month **qualification phase** with the following subjects: vocational orientation, German as a foreign language, IT-skills, English and social studies (f.e. sex education, conflict training, orientation in public space or to find one’s way in everyday life). Mathematics will be taught in the future also because the educational level of the participants declined sharply.
- The qualification phase is followed by the **practical phase**, where in addition to internships applications are written and application interviews are practised. Internships last between one week and four months. Longer internships are mostly followed by a direct transition into apprenticeships. Once a week there is one day of course parallel to the internships, where an intensive coaching of the internships in the form of reflections in the group is offered.
- According to their individual needs, the practical phase is followed by an **application phase**. Manner and courtesy receive special attention, e.g. “handshaking when meeting” or “be able to look each other in the eyes while speaking”. Behavioural things like that are not so self-evident in other cultures as well as in our culture. The participants are taught that such behaviour is of great importance for being successful in application situations.

Quality dimensions

Dimension 1: Curriculum and competency standards

Are there any specific conditions of the curriculum and didactics?

A special feature of J-u-L-I-A is the “sensitisation tool”. The participants are provided with mentors in this tool (for an additional description see dimension 2).

⁷ see description on the following website <http://www.integrationshaus.at/en/>

Is access to the programme/module flexible/open?

Requirements for participation are

- good knowledge of the German language and a leaving exam of general secondary school
- Documents for the access to employment have to be available, e.g. working permission.
- The participants have to be registered as job seeking/looking for an apprenticeship by the public employment service.
- There has to be a migration background, that means a migration background must be present, i.e. young people living in Austria in the second or third generation and thus holding Austrian nationality can also participate. About 60 percent of the participants of the actual course are refugees or person seeking asylum and about 40 percent of them are living in Austria since birth. Nationalities are broadly diversified (Chechnya, Serbia, Croatia, Albania, Afghanistan or various African countries) because a larger number of members of one ethnic group was deliberately not admitted to the course.

The participants are either send to J-u-L-I-A by the public employment service or they are forwarded by another module within the network “Dynamo” or another counselling institution or they come on their own through word of mouth advertising.

An internal clearing is made for the final decision of participation (see quality dimension 2).

Is the curriculum competence-oriented/competence-based?

The curriculum focuses on the acquirement of general occupational, theoretical and occupational-specific competencies and the training is based on the prior competencies of the participants. Besides group work and individual support the internships in the companies are the most important learning fields.

Does the curriculum ensure the development of

a) key competencies?

Key competencies like independence, self presentation, to have clarity about ones further life (“to know what to want”), to formulate clear objectives, accuracy or other social and technical skills are essential contents of the subject “social studies” or within the scope of psychosocial support.

Self-evident social and technical skills are also trained in practice, e.g. all participants do have to submit a sick certificate in the case of illness immediately and thus they are prepared to requirements in internships.

b) vocational competencies?

Vocational competencies are gained in internships.

Does the programme/module allow flexibility a) concerning the demands of the individual, b) concerning the competencies of the individual, c) concerning the interests of the individual?

Vocational orientation in J-u-L-I-A starts with the individual career aspiration of the participants. If possible, the first internship is being sought in the preferred job, even if the starting situation is difficult, because e.g. the occupational field is not fitting, the occupational perspectives are bad or the career aspiration is culturally influenced or determined by parents. But experience has shown that most participants move away from their career aspiration only when they have made first practical experiences. As a result, this contributes considerably to the success of the individual learning process

The participants hold one-to-one talks with the occupational orientation counselor once a month or as required, where individual situations are reflected.

Does the programme/module allow flexibility d) concerning the connectivity of programmes or module?

As mentioned above, J-u-L-I-A is integrated in a network of services for the target group “young people with migration background”. The network “Dynamo”⁸ offers training of basic qualifications and educational achievement as well as integration into the educational system and into the labour market. Clearing, occupational orientation and psychosocial consultation are treated as accompanying parts. It is the aim to broaden the scope for action of young immigrants and to counter the outstanding high unemployment rate within this target group. The individual services are assembled in modules and the participants can change from one module to the next as needed, i.e. from language acquisition and literacy up to higher education. Dynamo is financed by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture (BMUKK) and by the European social fund. The services are provided by various organisations. The administration is done by a network co-ordinator and via regular administration meetings. Working groups are responsible for the continuous development of the pedagogical concept and they are dealing with themes like counselling, social work or learning to learn.

Does the programme/module allow flexibility e) concerning partial and full qualifications?

J-u-L-I-A offers vocational orientation and preparation for the entry into labour market. Formal educational qualification cannot be gained.

Is the curriculum work-process orientated?

The curriculum is based on experiences made by participants in internships. Besides the exchange within the group there is an individual coaching with the focus on situations at concrete internships.

Preparations for job interviews are oriented at the requirements of the co-operating companies and contents of “German as a foreign language” are arranged flexibly to meet the needs of the respective desired occupational field.

Which forms and methods of evaluation are used

a) to measure output requirements?

The funding authority BMUKK specifies an outplacement rate. In three years of total project duration, 50 percent of the participants do have to be placed in either apprenticeships or jobs or further education.

b) to measure the acquisition of competencies?

Experiences of the participants are discussed in the coaching process of the internships and it is reflected within regular feedbacks, to what extend personal requirements fit the career aspiration and which competencies still have to be acquired.

c) to measure the competencies and applicability of the pedagogical personnel?

The colleagues of J-u-L-I-A regularly carry out internal self-evaluations of teaching and counselling. Furthermore, an evaluation form of the public employment service must be filled in by the participants.

Evaluation of mentors is made during regular meetings.

Dimension 2: Learning support system and infrastructure

Is there any counselling provided before students enter the programme/module?

In the run-up to a participation in J-u-L-I-A counselling is offered by Dynamo, mainly educational counselling.

Counselling on asylum questions and foreign employment is offered by the Integrationshaus.

The public employment service is also counselling young people looking for apprenticeship or job in the run-up to an assignment to J-u-L-I-A.

⁸ see description in the following leaflet <http://www.integrationshaus.at/cgi-bin/file.pl?id=427>

Is there to clear the situation of the target group/individual before introducing a programme or module?

As mentioned above, a clearing interview is made. It is based on a standardised questionnaire. Amongst others, the educational background of the parents is clarified because less education or high education point to certain learning behaviour. Due to cultural reasons, clarification of family planning is important for girls as well as for boys. Many young people are returned in their countries of origin after marriage and thus a started vocational education will not be concluded. Furthermore, career aspirations, hobbies and personal interests are already requested. Knowledge of the German language is tested by means of the ability to express.

Problems like difficulties with the family or drug abuse are only known before the start of the program if the persons concerned are sent from a competent counselling institute. Otherwise, the problems come up in personal conversations with the pedagogical experts during the course procedure and then the pedagogical experts try to find a solution.

Does the possibility exist to embrace/rely on the culture/environment of the individual?

J-u-L-I-A starts with an "intercultural knowledge" of all participants, i.e. each participant presents his country and culture. As mentioned above, during the pre-selection great attention is paid to a combination of various different nations to avoid ethnic conflicts.

The employees know all about the respective cultural peculiarities and they will go into it during the course, e.g. in certain ethnic groups hand shaking is not usually for the welcome or it is considered to be impolite when a young one looks in the eyes of an adult. The participants learn about the Austrian rules of behaviour, amongst other things as a preparation for job interviews.

Often, mentors take over this introduction into social life and make the young familiar to the socio cultural background in Austria.

Is any assistance provided for the target group/individual to reveal if they have entrance problems before starting the programme or module (e.g. language problems)?

In the network "Dynamo", the participants are prepared for the necessary requirements of J-u-L-I-A, e.g. German language skills or leaving exam of general secondary school.

Is the target group involved in decision making about the programme (e.g. necessary support)?

The participants are not involved in decision making about the programme but through orientation towards the individual needs influence is taken on the concrete course content.

Is the programme accessible for the target group/individual (e.g. Are local factors taken into consideration)?

Access for potentially interested persons is easy because of the housing in the Integrationshaus as the contact point for refugees and immigrants.

Is any assistance provided to remove psychological barriers of learning?

Learning assistance is provided in J-u-L-I-A by individual assistance or assistance of groups. The mentors are partly supporting the participants. They are working with the participants on an individual basis and they link to the participants very specific needs.

A further development of methods is validated within the scope of the network "Dynamo" in the already mentioned work group.

Is any individualized pedagogical assistance/guidance/support provided for the target group/individual (e.g. coaching, advice)?

Individual guidance is carried out in the above mentioned regular one-to-one feedback talks and in the scope of support by the mentors.

Mentors support the participants in applications and finding an apprenticeship, provide practical advice and offer their professional networks. They work on a voluntary basis and receive training at the beginning of their work. A supporting mentors meeting with a staff member takes place monthly which is used for ongoing schooling and reflection. Contents are e.g. explanations of the specific nature of various cultures or family situations, flight and the associated traumata, diversity or interculturality. Mentors are personal attachment figures who can individually meet the current situation.

Is individualized feedback regularly provided? If yes, how (in what form) is this organized and provided?

The participants receive individualized feedback in monthly one-to-one talks to their pedagogical experts and in contacts with their mentors as already mentioned above.

Dimension 3: Preconditions of the target group

Do selection procedures for the target group exist before they start a programme or module, e.g. analysis of competencies? If yes, is the selection subject-oriented?

Prerequisite for the participation in J-u-L-I-A is the above mentioned clearing interview.

Additionally, a short written grading test is carried out (content: "Write something about you and your life" and short questions about geography, biology, history and mathematics).

Do associated programmes for parents or other family members exist?

J-u-L-I-A has no regular services for parents but conducts talks with parents in case of need if they are living in Austria with their children. Sometimes guidance and assistance is necessary for the whole family because the young are linguistically the "bridge" to public authorities. In these cases, the colleagues of J-u-L-I-A fall back on the resources of the Integrationshaus.

Are the members of the target group functional literate? Have the members of the target group the basic skills (writing, reading, mathematics)?

Basic skills in German and mathematics on level of general secondary school are required for participants. In reality, the level of some of the participants is equivalent to an exam of school of special educational needs.

Have the members of the target group IT-skills/competencies (e.g. to be engaged in E-learning programmes)?

IT-skills are no requirement for participation, thus previous experiences are different but basic skills are mostly present.

Dimension 4: Acquisition of competencies

What competencies can be acquired during the programme or module? If yes, what specific methods are used?

Participants close gaps or deepen their current existing schooling in the disciplines German, English and mathematics.

On basis of their IT-skills, they learn to write letters of application, to create resumes, to save files (as an important requirement) and to make relevant research in the internet.

In internships and internship reflections general occupational key competencies like independence, ability to work in a team, realisation of contextual fields of work or compliance of action guides are communicated.

Used methods are classical school lessons but with innovative access to learning or project work as the above-mentioned self-presentation. Presentations, e.g. on the subject of questions of integration, are organised. Internships and internship reflections are provided for the learning of occupational competencies.

Is it possible to develop vocational competencies by completing this programme or module? If yes, what specific methods are used?

See above.

Dimension 5: Validation of competencies

Are competencies recognized/validated on the basis of how they are formed? Are they tested in a valid and objective way?

As described above, acquisition of occupational competencies is done in internships and validation is done in the internship reflection, i.e. reflection in the group or in one-to-one talks.

Within the educational second-chance qualification minor tests are made, whereby pressure to perform should be avoided.

Starting from autumn 2009, the acquired linguistic skills in German and English are tested and certified by means of the European language portfolio.

Are special tools used to recognize/validate informally or non-formally acquired competencies? If yes, what tools are used? Who (what kind of organization) recognizes/validates informally or non-formally acquired competencies and how?

Up to now, psychological tests were introduced in case of need to ascertain occupational interests and existing competencies of the participants.

In the future, a separate competence profile is to be made following the method „Kompetenzenbilanz“ (developed by Zukunftszentrum Tirol)⁹ and other instruments for acquiring and validating competencies for immigrants, which will be the basis for occupational orientation.

As already mentioned in the introduction, the institutional framework for an official acceptance and validation of informally acquired competencies, respectively, is still missing in Austria.

Dimension 6: Methods and tools for encouraging learning

Is counselling provided through the programme or module?

Individual counselling is part of the concept of J-u-L-I-A as already mentioned.

Do individualized learning pathways exist? If yes, what kind of and how are they structured?

As described above, individual counselling and meetings with the mentors support the individual learning progress.

Do practice-based methods (e.g. workplace-based learning, project work) exist?

Occupational orientation and acquisition of competencies is based on the experiences in the internships. The contents of the theoretical subjects are also oriented on this work-place learning experiences.

Is reflection on the learning process encouraged? If yes, in what way?

Reflection takes place during individual counselling and with mentors. Learning progress is jointly discussed in groups and methods of “learning to learn” are presented and applied.

⁹ see informations on the website of the „Zukunftszentrum Tirol“ <http://www.zukunftszentrum.at/service/kompetenzbilanz/die-kompetenzbilanz>

Dimension 7: Recognition of qualifications

Are modules connected to develop vocational competencies?

In connection with J-u-L-I-A, the successful participants complete an apprenticeship and pass through the apprenticeship leave exam. Within the network “Dynamo” interested participants are placed in further vocational secondary schools and they can receive learning guidance.

Does the programme or do the modules aim for the development of vocational competencies?

J-u-L-I-A is a vocational preparation programme and is not focused on a vocational education. As described above, the aim of J-u-L-I-A is the acquirement of basic vocational competencies by means of internships.

Is it possible to get to know different workplaces during the placement?

The young people mostly pass internships in different companies and they get to know different jobs and their requirements.

Does the possibility exist to get a certificate from the companies on the basis of the placement?

The participants get internship certificates which then can be enclosed to letters of application. These certificates are not official ones.

Do cooperations with other institutions/providers of similar programmes or modules exist?

There are co-operations with other programmes in the field of labour market policy, e.g. with the “Verein Sprungbrett”, a counselling institution for girls going for an education in a technical occupational field, or the “WUK”¹⁰, a great provider for the target group young people.

Within the Integrationshaus, a close co-operation with the project JAWA („Junge Asylberechtigte auf dem Weg in die Arbeitswelt“) exists. This project has a similar focus as J-u-L-I-A but only for the target group asylum-seeking young people. Joined teaching units are held to some extent and information about potential internships and apprenticeships are exchanged.

There are also co-operations with the vocational training centre of the bfi (BAZ¹¹) as well as with providers of “integrative learning”, if the participants are interested in completion of apprenticeships within the context of second-chance education (in the metal or electrical fields or IT).

Dimension 8: Employability

How are regional labour market demands taken into consideration when introducing a programme or module? Are the demands of the regional labour market satisfied?

The demands of the current regional labour market situation are taken into consideration during the search for internships and apprenticeships.

Do any partnerships with companies exist to realize/help the transition from learning to working?

Company internships are a central element of the concept of J-u-L-I-A. There are partnerships with small and medium-sized businesses which are close to the Integrationshaus. Large companies are, if anything, offering “programmes”, e.g. Siemens offers an educational programme for deaf young people. Thus, these companies are not suited as contacts.

Is there any assistance provided to help finding a job (e.g. job centers)?

Outplacement support is an objective to be attained and takes place in one-to-one talks, in groups and with mentors as mentioned above.

¹⁰ see services for the target group within the “Wiener Kultur- und Werkstättenzentrum (WUK)”
http://www.wuk.at/index.php/sozial/angebot/0/angebot_jugendliche_arbeitssuche.html

¹¹ see website of BAZ <http://www.baz.at/>

Does counselling exist after the end of the programme or module? Does follow-up exist after the programme or module?

After the end of the course and the start of the apprenticeship, aftercare counselling is offered for half a year. This follow-up assistance serves to ensure preservation of apprenticeship. In some cases, the assistance is continued for free beyond this point by mentors or pedagogical experts, e.g. for unaccompanied under-aged refugees without an attachment figure in Austria.

A follow-up is possible within the network "Dynamo", which organises supporting private lessons for part-time vocational schools.

Does cooperation with companies exist? If yes a) how is this organized? b) are companies any how rewarded for their willingness for cooperation or workplace provision?

Companies providing internships are essential partners during the process of vocational orientation. The companies are in charge of the project manager of J-u-L-I-A. During the internship assistance, talks are regularly held with company representatives. After the beginning of apprenticeship, talks are held in case of need, e.g. in conflict situation or if problems occur.

Companies are able to get to know the young people better. As a result companies are saving money for training and personnel because apprenticeships are not disengaged after the end of the trial period.

Companies are informed about current funding of apprenticeship by the staff of J-u-L-I-A and they are supported in transaction of application. Especially for small and medium-sized businesses, the funds are of great importance to be able to employ trainees.

Companies do consider it as a social responsibility to offer educational opportunities to young people and especially to young people with migration background. There are also personal motives within the company representatives because of connections to a certain land or continent from time to time.

Dimension 9: Methods and tools of social integration

Is the certificate at the end of programme or module recognized by a) the companies or b) the society?

The programme certificate is not recognised and is therefore of little importance. However, the internship certificates are accepted as proofs of competencies in the application process by companies.

Does vocational/occupational mobility and cross company flexibility exist?

At the start, there are five skilled trades favoured by the participants most of the time. It is the aim of J-u-L-I-A to broaden the career aspirations and for this reason to increase vocational flexibility which is very difficult in young people with migration background and above all in girls. Job descriptions are still characterised by tradition in this target group.

Vocational flexibility with reference to company changes is also very unrealistic. A permanent job subsequent to apprenticeship is considered to be already a great success.

Is it possible to find a job for the target group/individual providing employment for a longer period of time?

Attention is paid to a permanent employment when outplacing participants to apprenticeships. At present, it is not yet possible to talk about achievement of objectives because not even one apprenticeship was completed up to now, all apprenticeships are still upright.

In which sectors are members of the target group mainly employed?

Outplacements were made into the following skill trades:

- office assistant
- retail trade services specialising in food
- pharmaceutical trade assistant

- orthopaedic technician
- hotel- and restaurant trade commercial assistant
- cake and pastry baker

Does an advancement of vocational mobility and flexibility of the target group/individual exist after the programme/module completion?

As described above, an enlargement of possible skills trade is carried out during the vocational orientation. Subsequently to J-u-L-I-A, vocational mobility and flexibility is rather low and is not intended too.

Dimension 10: Pedagogical personnel

What special qualifications do those dealing with the target group have?

The members of staff are social workers or psychologists.

What special competencies are needed to work with the target group (e.g. minority cultural etc.)?

A fundamental prerequisite is either a certificate as trainer for “German as a foreign language” (DAF) or “German as a second language” (DAZ). The funding authorities also demand gender and diversity training certificates from the staff members.

Staff members are very familiar with the different cultural backgrounds and ethnic problems of their participants because often they have been supporting refugees or foreigners for years. As soon as new groups of refugees arrive in Austria, trainings are organised by the asylum coordination unit.

Where and how are these competencies developed? How are they trained to be able to deal with the target group? How and how frequently is their further training organized?

The training for “vocational training provider” is paid by the Integrationshaus as the employer. Moreover, a budget for further training is available and one week per year can be used for further training by all staff members. Additionally, internal seminars and advanced trainings, e.g. for rights of asylum or rights of foreigners, ethnic questions or child protection, are offered. It is a part of the corporate culture of the Integrationshaus to attach great importance to further training.

Is the personal appropriateness of the pedagogical personnel validated? If yes, how is this done?

The personal appropriateness of potential employees is validated during job interviews. The potential employees often show great empathy for the target group and they have been working in this area for a longer period of time.

Is the pedagogical personnel involved in target group relevant decisions? If yes, how is this done?

Decisions are jointly made in team meetings.

Is any special encouragement for the personnel provided? If yes, in what form?

There are top-down feedbacks with all employees once a year.

Team supervision takes place monthly, where cases are reflected. The project management reports to the management of the Integrationshaus every six weeks. As already mentioned, professional exchange takes place in the working group of the network “Dynamo”.

Besides the empathy for the target group, a high level of identification with the employer Integrationshaus exists as can be seen from the offer of after work clubbings, works outings and various festivities.

4. Programmes for the target group: Overview and comparison

Another good practice example: Apprenticeship training in a training company

The Austrian government has passed the so called Youth Guarantee Act (as already described in the prestudy), which states that every young person looking for a work place is entitled to be offered one within a certain period of time. This Act is the legal basis for the supra-company apprenticeship system.

Weidinger&Partner is a training company providing such apprenticeship training. Following skills trade are trained:

- Retail trade services
- Plant gardener
- Hairdresser
- Painter
- Metal industry technician specialising in metal treatment engineering
- Joinery

In the current training classes about 120 young people are trained, 80 percent of them with a migration background. Each class has about 20 participants. When there are dropouts during the training, new participants can only follow when their prior qualifications fit in the class.

The apprenticeship training is funded by the public employment service and the potential participants have to go through a dictated clearing process.

Preconditions are

- completed compulsory education,
- no leaving exam of general secondary school,
- (maybe) disability certification
- finishing a “vocational orientation coaching (BOCO-i)”. This process lasts 11 weeks and at the end the skilled trade should be fixed for the potential participants, so they can be passed on to the different training companies.

The start of the programme is in November and part-time vocational school starts at February. So during the first half year another clearing process takes place within Weidinger&Partner. The young people have to bring their school leaving exams and individual skills and competencies are filtered out. The participants must be able to follow guidelines or to express themselves in the German language to succeed in part-time vocational school. The individual situation is also cleared and counselling provided if necessary. This intensive clearing process leads to little drop out rates during the training.

There is an existing framework for the curricula of apprenticeship trainings, which has to be fulfilled by the trainers. But the specific condition of the training by Weidinger&Partner is the individualization beside this framework. The trainers provide individual need-driven support for all participants concerning the practical training and the theoretical qualification.

Beside the trainers pedagogical experts offer individual counselling, especially for problems not concerning the training, i.e. sexuality, drugs, violence etc.

The participants acquire vocational competencies at the training workshop of Weidinger&Partner, in the part-time vocational school and in internships in companies. These internships are organised from an own department at Weidinger&Partner. The partner companies have to answer feedback questionnaires for the trainees, which are the basis for their further training goals. In the last year of the apprenticeship training internships are important for a successful outplacement. Job application training is provided in the group and the different training groups are supporting each other, i.e. the hairdressers give styling tips to their colleagues.

Learning is based on practice-orientated methods, because theoretical-based methods are not successful for this target group. Developing social skills and participate in the society is therefore also an important learning goal. The trainers celebrate birthdays with their trainees, provide sport activities, go to a museum, show them the inner city of Vienna with the important places of interest or visit the Austrian parliament.

A problem which has to be handled is the difficulty to reach the parents. Often they don't care about their children and are not involved in their apprenticeship training. Sometimes the trainers have to decide in individual cases to inform the youth welfare office.

As a conclusion the relevant quality criteria of this programme are like above in the analysed vocational preparation programmes the concept of utmost individualization and the high professional attitude of the trainers. This quality criteria lead to successful outplacement on the primary labour market, i.e. the hairdressers of the last course already had employment contracts in prospect half a year before passing through their apprenticeship leave exam.

Examples of innovative methods in other programmes for the target group

“Kompetenzwerkstatt VHS Meidling”

The “Kompetenzwerkstatt” is also an offer for vocational orientation with the aim that all participants have afterwards a clear idea of their vocational future and the necessary next qualification steps. The training lasts eight weeks. First the method of „Kompetenzenbilanz“ (developed by Zukunftszentrum Tirol) is introduced and the young people are dealing with their interests, strengths, values and targets. The practical part is a project work which should be related to the respective vocational targets. An example: If somebody is interested in a social occupation, a play afternoon for children can be organised and carried out, ideally in a childcare facility, to get to know the requirements of a concrete working place. The participants organise such a project with assistance of their pedagogical experts and make documentations by means of a final paper. The experiences flow into the development of an individual career plan.

Space!lab (provided from Volkshilfe Beschäftigung and WUK):

This programme is the follow-up of an innovative programme developed in the EQUAL-period.

Space!lab goes through five phases called „it's your turn“, „come in“, „try it“, „on the job“ and „keep on going“. The names of the phases already explain a little what the subjects are.

The innovation is based on the way how to inform the target group (young people with low qualifications and little work experiences) about the project in a direct approach at various typical meeting points or by multipliers in facilities working with the target group or at least via various media.

In the second phase stabilization is the main objective. The participants should be introduced to a daily structure, motivation should be consolidated and awareness about their capacity for teamwork should be developed. Individual career plans are initiated.

In the third phase participants can put their newly acquired skills into practice in the course of a one-month employment training period. These internships, that is also an innovative approach, have a connection to the daily life of the adolescents. During the summer season the main focus of the internships lies in maintenance and design of parks, playgrounds and sports fields. During the winter season the occupation includes simple renovation tasks in sport associations, youth centres and other target group specific and community oriented facilities.

In the next phase an internship of four months is possible to develop occupational perspectives due to the confrontation with the current work conditions and the specification of necessary education or qualification as the next step.

The last phase provides aftercare for a maximum of three months to support the participants in the realisation of their career plans.

Comparison of the described programmes

Quality and success of the vocational preparation programmes BOK/BOKgastro and J-u-L-I-A are based on

- a mixture of educational second-chance qualification on the one hand and acquirement of vocational competencies in practical testing in internships on the other hand,
- a concept of utmost individualisation,
- accompanying work with parents
- cooperations with companies and other programmes.

Both programmes show these quality criteria but they differ in concrete implementation.

BOK/BOKgastro introduces individual educational plans and a case documentation system and is therefore able to offer individual learning support for trainees. In J-u-L-I-A, the mentors model not only offers individual learning support but also a very personal assistance with all questions, problems and conflicts.

BOK/BOKgastro institutionalised the work with parents and involves them in many processes whereas in J-u-L-I-A the work with parents is concentrated on specific occasions.

In BOKgastro the close cooperation with the part-time vocational school for gastronomy represents a quality criterion for the best possible preparation for the future requirements in part-time vocational schools. J-u-L-I-A is a module in an overall network which offers a step-by-step higher education qualification to the target group.

Apprenticeship training in a training company leads in comparison to the vocational training programmes to a full qualification. Most of the participants finish the programme with an apprenticeship leave exam. But the secret of the success seems to be the same. The instructors have a very personal relationship to their apprentices. They are not only responsible for the vocational training, but also for social integration. An intense face-to-face counselling during the programme founds therefore the basis for a successful vocational training.