



QualiMoVET

National Study Germany

Programmes and modules for socially disadvantaged young people
Two examples of good practice in Germany



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Glossary

AC	Assessment Center
BAVBVO	Berufsausbildungsvorbereitungs-Bescheinigungsverordnung (Law to ensure the recognition of VET preparation courses)
BiBB:	Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (Federal Institute for Vocational Training)
BBiG	Berufsbildungsgesetz (German Vocational training law)
DB	Deutsche Bahn AG (German railway company)
EQ	Einstiegsqualifizierung (Entrance Qualification)
QB	Qualifizierungsbaustein (Qualification Unit)
Q-Pass	Qualifizierungspass (Qualification Pass to document (in-)formal qualifications)
VET	Vocational education and training

Introduction

The German QualiMoVET study on good practice regarding quality standards examines two different approaches of educational programmes for socially disadvantaged young people in Germany.

- **Programm 501/301 and the model project** within 501/301 carried out by BBJ and other stakeholders in Berlin between 1988 and 2006. The programme was primarily an employment programme, where young people had the chance to get a working place for up to three years. While working in the companies they also had to qualify themselves in different courses, some of them even managed to achieve a training qualification in VET.
- **EQ- “Chance Plus”** carried out by the German railway company together with other stakeholders. It is a VET preparation programme that offers practical experience, theoretical classes and individual guidance to its participants. There is a chance to get some of the acquired competences recognised for a future VET qualification.

The two programmes offer a combination of theoretical learning, individual guidance and overall centrally: practical experience under realistic/real market conditions. Furthermore, they have another approach in common: they try to improve permeability and connectivity of the programmes to follow up programmes which should lead in the ideal case to a training qualification in VET. Therefore all the chosen programmes work with some kind of modules.

The discussion about modules in Germany has been going on very long and diverse. For more than thirty years different stakeholders discuss the pros and cons of modules in VET. When speaking of modules the fact is that not everybody means the same. Different concepts stand behind the term “module”, some also call it qualification unit or training unit. To understand the background of this study, it is important to distinguish between two different terms that are used in the study:

Qualification units (Qualifizierungsbausteine) (QB): Qualification units have their legal base in the German Vocational Training Law (BBiG). They aim at young people that are not able to start VET yet and who are in VET preparation. They have a clear connection to the regular vocational education guidelines that are defined for each profession. The idea is that single QB can be recognised for a regular VET. A qualification unit comprises not only vocational competences, but also social and personal competences. Qualification units are used in the EQ-“Chance Plus”.

Training units (Ausbildungsbausteine): Training units form a part of the introduced 501/301 programme and its model project. Here different training units that sum up to modules contain theory and practice that young people without a VET qualification can go through on their workplace accompanied by a qualification plan and individual guidance. After having finished all necessary training units the participants can take the external student’s examination carried out by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which leads to a full VET qualification.

Whereas training modules may lead to a full qualification in VET, qualification units are used in the context of VET preparation only.

The Programme 501/301 and the model project “Alternative ways for acquiring accredited vocational qualifications”

General information on the programme

- The programme 501/301 was realised in Berlin from 1988 to 2006.
- The conceptual and organisational implementation was conducted by the BBJ Non-Profit Private Limited Company (BBJ Servis gGmbH) (support for programme participants and companies).
- Funding was provided by the Berlin Senate Administration for Work, Women and Social Affairs, the ESF, the Federal Ministry for Women, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens and Youth, the former Ministry for Education, Science, Research and Technology, The Child and youth plan of the Federation (*Kinder- und Jugendplan des Bundes*)/ Federal Youth Plan (*Bundesjugendplan*) and the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung*)
- The programme 501/301 was designed for the target group of unskilled unemployed youths, aged 18 to 27, who usually did not possess a formal vocational training qualification and who had hardly any perspective to find a regular job because of their biographical data and low qualification. They were given the chance to find a job of their choice within small and medium enterprises in Berlin. For establishing an additional workplace, the companies received public funding for financing a part of the indirect labour costs. This financial support could be extended up to three years and was shaped in a digressive way.
- The participants were accompanied by social workers who also served as contact persons available to the companies in case they needed further clarification on the project.
- The participants were obliged to pursue continuing education. 20 percent of their working time had to be used for extra-occupational training at external education providers. Another 20 percent of the working time had to be used for achieving further qualification within the company via training on the job, which needed to be proved by qualification plans.
- The **model project “Alternative ways of acquiring accredited qualifications”** which was conducted within the context of programme 501/301 in cooperation with the Federal Institute for Vocational Training from 1995 to 2000 constitutes a consistent advancement of the qualification approach within the programme 501/301. Program participants were equipped with the knowledge for passing the external vocational training examination for the occupation “office communication clerk” by the chamber of commerce and industry, according to § 40.2 of the Vocational Training Law (BBiG). For tracking the learning process and the acquired knowledge and to finally certify it for the single participants, a qualification pass was developed, in which the continuing education process was documented and which serves as a proof for submission to the chambers of commerce, which is required in order to be accepted for the external examination.
- Regarding the magnitude of the project, on average 650 persons per month were under contract.
- In this modular concept, modules were understood as separately certifiable qualifications which are part of a whole profession (finally examined by the chamber) (see BBJ Servis 2000, p. 70).

Dimensions

1. Curriculum / Competence Standards

1. Are there any specific conditions of the curriculum and the didactics?

Regarding the programme 501/301:

A permanent employment was obtained (supported by digressive wage subsidies). The prospect of a regular work contract, wage and commitment generated incentives for the participants. Furthermore, coercion to ongoing qualification existed. The qualification was provided by external education providers (public as well as private) in a non-uniform manner, tailored to the individual need of the participant, a driving license could also be obtained. The ongoing qualification and training measures were meaningful especially because the participants could immediately make use of their acquired skills in the companies, which enhanced their learning motivation.

Regarding the model project:

Flexibility and connectivity were made possible by modularisation. Single module examinations could be taken twice a year, independently of the individual qualification time. The module examinations had the purpose to prove that the participants had progressed in their learning, this way the period until they could have been accepted for the final examinations by the chambers could be shortened.

2. Is access to the programme / module flexible / open?

Regarding the 501/301 program:

Preconditions to be admitted to the program are

- living in Berlin for at least one year
- being aged 18-27,
- being unemployed for at least one year,
- holding a valid employment permission, and
- the insufficient qualification being the reason for the unemployment status.

It is at any time possible to enter the program after a telephone talk followed by a personal conversation. The participants need to show initiative by finding a workplace and are expected to demonstrate an interest in the particular occupational perspective.

Access to the program was built on a voluntary basis, to consciously prevent any connotations with a public agency.

Regarding the model project:

The model project was designed to fit the same target group as described above. It starts every 6th month. Before the specific modules could be attended, either a basic module needed to be passed or the eligibility had to be observed via a written or oral test procedure (see BBJ Consult 1997, p.12f.)

3. Is the curriculum competence-oriented / based?

Regarding the 501/301 program:

Because the participants were seen as employees rather than apprentices, no specific vocational training programs existed for them. The continuing education took place in a non-uniform manner and was tailored to the individual need of the participant. Within the following years, for every participant individual training and qualification plans were developed,

corresponding to the German vocational guidelines that define a subject framework for every vocational profile.

Regarding the model project:

The single modules were based on the German vocational guidelines, also considering current internal company needs. This way the modules were designed in a way reflecting the workplace surroundings. One module could consist of content that usually would have been spread over the different years of apprenticeship, according to the regular German vocational guidelines. The different areas of competence of the occupation were reflected, theory and practice were communicated. The modules were subdivided into training units that structure and support learning in a working environment. In terms of time and contents, units were related to phases of intensive working practice in the company. Determined through the qualification plan those job accompanying units were carried out by external education providers.

4. Does the curriculum ensure the development of

- a) key competences?
- b) professional competences?

Regarding the 501/301 program:

The employment contract over three years facilitated the acquisition of key competences. Moreover, the qualification plan corresponded to the German vocational guidelines. Personal, social and methodological skills could be developed within the daily work routine and the continuing education.

Regarding the model project:

The programme distinguished between basic and advanced qualifications. The basic qualifications, including basic IT-knowledge and language skills, were compatible with many different fields of occupation. In addition, training units could be completed which can be applied independently of the particular occupation (e.g. job application training, language skills) (see BBJ Consult AG 2002, p.3f.). If a participant did not have the possibility to complete a module in the respective company, he or she had to complete it in another company.

5. Do the programmes / modules allow flexibility

- a) concerning the demands of the individual?
- b) concerning the competences of the individual?
- c) concerning the interests of the individual?
- d) concerning the connectivity of programmes or modules?
- e) concerning partial and full qualifications?

Regarding the 501/301 program:

The concept was based predominantly on the needs, competences and interests of the participants. They were in charge of finding a workplace and were then qualified corresponding to their individual needs while working at a particular company. The interests of the respective employers were of importance as well, because the employers had to integrate the participants in the internal workflow and release them from work so they could attend the continuing education. Regarding the connectivity of the program, the employer was expected to employ the participant on a regular basis after public funding for financing a part of the indirect labour costs expired.

Regarding the model project:

The modular concept ensured that the participants could complete the modules in a flexible way and that they could individually decide about the order of modules, corresponding to their needs (within a given framework).

6. Is the curriculum work-process oriented?

Regarding the 501/301 program:

As this program predominantly was focused on employment, no particular curriculum for the participants existed. The continuing education of the participants was arranged reflecting the individual needs as well as the current needs of the respective company.

Regarding the model project:

The curriculum was work-process oriented and qualified the participants to finally achieve an accredited vocational qualification.

7. Which forms / methods of evaluation are used?

a) to measure output requirements?

b) to measure the acquisition of competences?

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

Regarding the 501/301 program:

Measuring the acquisition of competences took place individually within the company, e.g. via conversations and by observing if work assignments were completed successfully. With respect to the external education, tests were conducted.

Regarding the model project:

The acquisition of competences was measured with evaluation talks, modular exams, external examination.

2. Learning support system and infrastructure

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

Regarding the 501/301 program and the model project:

The first contact was established with a phone call. First questions could be answered and clarifications regarding the program were made. The phone call was followed by a conversation while meeting the participant in person. In case the potential participant did not show interest in taking part, information about alternatives to the program was provided. During the orientation phase, the individual occupational aspirations were assessed and existing formal and informal competences were identified (see BBJ Consult AG 2002, p.1).

2. Is there support to clear the situation of the target group / individual before introducing a programme or module? (Something like assistance if problems with family, drugs etc exist)?

Regarding the 501/301 program and the model project:

During the conversation while meeting the potential participant in person, the social worker supported the clarification on individual problems that potentially would inhibit the participation in the program.

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

To a limited extent, the social workers were included in this respect. A gender or cultural mainstreaming aspect has not been integrated into the program concept at that time. However, in some courses (e.g. nursing) culture-specific aspects regarding the profession were considered.

4. 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 etc.)?

Within the scope of the basic modules and basic units German classes for immigrants were possible (see BBJ Consult AG 2002, p.3).

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

Regarding the 501/301 program:

The participants were requested to find a workplace themselves.

Regarding the model test:

No, the target group has not been involved in decision making about the programme.

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

In the beginning, the persons entering the program had been informed about it not only via public relations, but by word of mouth for the program. In addition, advertisement by information in the underground stations was very successful. By advertising the program in non-German daily newspapers, it was intended to increase the number of immigrants participating in the program. The program was restricted to the area of Berlin.

7. Is any assistance provided to remove psychological barriers of learning?

This was an important part of the program, see question 8.

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

Regarding the 501/301 program and the model project:

Yes, the social workers from BBJ were contact persons regarding diverse issues: consultations, continuing support, job information, and career planning as well as job application training were provided. Furthermore, social workers served as motivators and helped to solve conflicts (e.g. between participants and employers).

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

The participants were obliged to take part in evaluation and planning talks once a year, at the end of the probationary period and at the end of the program. In addition, further opportunities for individual feedback depended on the needs of the participants. Some expressed more needs; others less or no need for feedback at all.

3. Preconditions of the target group before entering a programme/ module (institutional level, learner level)

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

Regarding the 501/301 program:

The target group had to fulfil certain criteria:

- being unemployed for at least one year and living in Berlin for at least one year
- being aged 18-27,
- holding a valid employment permission, and
- the insufficient qualification being the reason for the unemployment status
- being motivated and proactive
- manage to find a workplace on their own
- interest in employment perspective

Following the personal consultation, it was assessed whether the applicant fulfils these criteria. In case of stronger demand, waiting lists existed.

Regarding the model project:

Within the process of assessing competences, three components existed: a pre-selection of participants, an assessment phase and a qualification planning was conducted. This procedure served to make the individual planning more flexible and design it to fit the individual requirements. The theoretical and practical competences were assessed. This procedure was designed to focus on the particular occupation. This assessment facilitated calculating the modules that have to be passed, the required time and the contents that should be learned by the participants on their own, be conveyed by the education provider or provided by the company. Another aim of the procedure was to examine the participants' motivation, stamina, ability to learn and whether the participants were especially afraid of exams:

1. Pre-selection,
2. Self-evaluation,
3. Assessment of knowledge by modular-supported written and oral tests,
4. Evaluation of the results of the self-evaluation and external assessment,
5. Creation of an individual qualification plan with the employer,
6. Reconciling the individual qualification plan with the employer.

In order to be accepted for the external students' examination by the chamber of commerce, the participants had to prove three years of working experience, the participation in the ability assessment, ongoing qualification during the program and the submission of the Q-Pass.

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

No associated programmes for parents or other family members exist.

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

The target group was very heterogeneous. The program was not explicitly designed for functionally illiterate persons, but a few participants were affected by this problem. Because one goal of the program was to plan the professional life with respect to individual characteristics, potential deficits could be taken into consideration.

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

See above: very heterogeneous group with different experiences and interests.

4. Process and support of acquisition of competences

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

Regarding the programme 501/301:

- Professional and social competences were acquired. Professional competences could be obtained in the occupational field that was chosen by the participant.
- Methods: Practical learning for all fields of occupation, learning at external education providers.
- One important element was the public wage subsidy which supported employment over a longer period, implying for the participants continuity, security and an opportunity to experience the own capabilities.

Regarding the model project:

A modular qualification, leading to the occupation "Office Communication Clerk" according to § 40.2 of the vocational training law could be obtained. The qualification process was divided into five different modules. Whereas one of these modules is a basic business administration module which is of relevance also for other occupations, four advanced modules are more subject-specific: human resource management, cost accounting, marketing and finance, corporate governance, and communication. The five modules were subdivided into smaller units. The modules were all designed equally with regard to the time, the importance of simulating the practice and they were compatible with regard to each other. A regular advice on learning, offered as a structuring element by the external education providers, helped the participant to reflect their place and progress in the qualification process and in which fields they might need to learn additionally on their own with the support of provided material.

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

Ideally, the participants were offered a permanent employment contract after the program had finished. The social workers provided a final consultation with respect to the time after the project had finished. Where the participants could not be offered a permanent contract, they were supported during the application process. Some of these participants have started a retraining or further qualification.

5. Process and support of validation of competences

1. Are competences recognised / validated on the basis of how they are formed?

Regarding the programme 501/301:

Here, one needs to distinguish between the different workplaces. Within the company, a reference letter was issued; the results of the work were discussed. Regarding the external examination, the progress was documented with certificates. Furthermore, acquired competences could be documented in the qualification pass.

Regarding the model project:

Differences between the different workplaces existed also in this project: Within the company, work results were documented with self-teaching material (so called "Lehrbrief"), the work results were discussed and a reference letter was issued. Regarding the external examination, methods were modular exams, discussions and advice on how to learn.

2. Are they tested in a valid and objective way?

The process of ability assessment included a testing period (tests, homework, talks, practical exercises)

3. Are special tools used to recognise / validate informally or non-formally acquired competences? If yes, what tools are used?

Yes, the "qualification pass" (also known as Q-pass) was developed within the model project. It is the formal basis for certification and accreditation in modular further vocational training systems. The qualification pass consists of a book bound element containing flexible inner pages for certificates and proof sheets, which can be obtained in the internet (www.qualifizierungspass.de) and processed on a computer. In addition to the personal data, the pass contains information regarding previous school education and work and vocational training experience, as well as other qualifications and skills of the user. In this respect not only formal learning pathways are taken into consideration, but also informally acquired competences e.g. language skills, work experience, stays abroad or voluntary work.

4. Who (what kind of organization) recognises / validates informally or non-formally acquired competences and how?

The accreditation of these competences was solely conducted by the external examination of the chamber of commerce.

6. Methods and tools for encouraging learning

a) School-based

b) Out of school

1. Is counselling provided through the programme or module?

Regarding the programme 501/301:

During a first conversation the personal and occupational aspirations, perspectives and problems were identified and the preconditions for acceptance to the project were clarified. Information about the program was issued. This conversation served as foundation for the relationship between the participant and the social worker. In addition, the participants were continuously accompanied by social workers, who provided support in case of arising conflicts at the workplace which need to be regulated, but the social workers gave support in the personal realm as well (on a voluntary basis). They also advised and motivated the participants in questions regarding the search for a job and the application process, but primarily the participants were expected to search for a workplace on their own.

Regarding the model project:

Individual counselling was the most important structuring element. The qualification was accompanied by social workers who served as contact persons to the participants during the whole period and they also were responsible for the regulation of the modalities of the subvention to the employers for the indirect labour costs. Within the framework of learning counselling, a first reflection was envisaged after completion of the basic module. This

counselling ended with an examination (“Prüfungskolloquium”), which was useful for the preparation of the examination by the chamber of commerce. The learning counselling included monitoring, steering and support (see BBJ Servis 2000, p.25ff). It served to optimise the professional, organisational and motivational learning conditions for achieving the qualification goal and should empower the participants to steer their working and learning processes on their own. Learning counselling took place when a modular exam was failed, in case of unusually conspicuous behaviour in class or a diminishing learning capability could be observed or when the qualification plan needed to be adjusted (see BBJ Servis 2000, p.120f). The learning counselling took place at the external education provider.

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

Because the participants were often disappointed by learning at school, it was important to provide them with learning opportunities which were explicitly not related to learning in a school context and instead were situated in a rather practical context (see BBJ Servis 2000, p. 170). The learning processes aimed at self-reflection, self-surveying and hereby at learning consciousness. The support and evaluation of learning processes was conducted by institutionalised and informal forms of verification at the external education provider. Learning evaluation is carried out by using self-teaching material (“Lehrbrief”), modular exams, certification procedures and learning counselling (see BBJ Servis 2000, p.112f. and the figure at p.113). The focus was on mobilising the own initiative of the young unemployed (see BBJ Consult AG 2002, p.1).

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

The whole program was focused on practical orientation. The employer was bound to procure at least 20 percent of the working time for external seminars, workshops, etc (see BBJ Consult AG 2002, p.1). In addition, another 20 percent of the working time should be used for continuing training on the job.

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

Regarding the programme 501/301:

The qualification pass was an instrument for reflection, planning and documentation at the same time. The learning counselling described above also supported reflection.

Regarding the model project:

A consistent reflection was enabled by the learning counselling at the external education provider, the self-teaching material (“Lehrbrief”) at the company and the modular exams.

7. Recognition of partial/ full qualifications

1. Are modules connected to develop vocational competences?

The modules in the model project were designed to meet the job descriptions in the vocational education guidelines, were combinable and led to an accredited vocational education examination. They were documented in a qualification pass and were subdivided into training units (see BBJ Servis 2000, p.70). The qualification pass system includes three components: standards, instruments, and a transfer concept. The instruments contain a blue booklet (consisting of the categories: vocational qualification in modules, recognised vocational training and supplementary training qualifications, work and training experience,

further qualification and skills, school education). An assessment procedure following the qualification pass comprises a qualitative evaluation of informally and practically acquired competences. The results are documented in the pass and build the foundation for further training within the framework of a qualification advancement plan. The transfer concept offers a distinguished schooling and counselling proposal for external education providers (BBJ Consult AG 2004, p. 5ff).

2. Does the programme or do the modules aim for the development of vocational competences?

Vocational competence ("Berufliche Handlungskompetenz") was aspired by the programme 501/301 as well as by the model project and should have been acquired in training sessions at the external education provider with obligatory attendance, on-the-job training as well as self-learning procedures. This means that the acquisition of the content of the training units should be finished within a given time framework and with media which was appropriate for the target group (see BBJ Servis 2000, p.83).

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

Regarding the programme 501/301:

Because the program was bound to a particular business, the participant was not meant to change the workplace. However, it was possible to change the company up to two times.

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

One characteristic of the programme 501/301 and the model project was a continuous employment over a timeframe of up to three years within a company. In so far, it was possible to get a reference letter at the end of the employment period.

Regarding the continuing education within the model project:

The modular exams, which took place every sixth month, included written and oral parts as well as parts simulating the practical work according to the standards recognised by the chamber of commerce. In case the modular exams were not passed, the participants needed to contact the learning counselling (Lernberatung) (see BBJ Servis 2000, p.25). The modular certificates were collected in the qualification pass, for the purpose of continuous documentation until the final examination (see BBJ Servis 2000, p.12).

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

The programme 501/301 and the model project were carried out in cooperation with BBJ (central coordination, organisational and guidance regarding the concept, social counselling of the participants, and support of the companies), two external education providers who were in charge of the continuing education of the participants in the model project, and many companies, in which the participants were employed. Additionally, the participants could attend qualification classes also at further external education providers (up to acquiring a driving license) to the extent necessary for their individual education. A huge network of stakeholders was integrated in these programs.

8. Employability

1. How are regional labour market demands taken into consideration when introducing a programme or module?

No steering was conducted regarding the fields of occupation aspired by the participants.

2. Are the demands of the regional labour market satisfied?

Regarding the programme 501/301:

The program was based on the idea that all occupations can be aspired within this program, therefore it was not reduced to one field of occupation and demands could not always be taken into consideration.

Regarding the model project:

The only occupational field in which a formally recognised qualification could be obtained here was the profession of an "office communication clerk", because this field already covered a broad intersecting field of the participants. The occupation was broadly demanded, in so far the general labour market has been respected, but the regional labour market specifics were not considered.

3. Do any partnerships with companies exist to realise / help with the transition from learning to working?

Regarding the programme 501/301:

The program was based on the idea to employ and qualify young people through working within companies of the first labour market. It intended the young people "getting stuck" on the labour market after having proved for three years to be able to work.

Regarding the model project:

A network of 46 employers who took part in the model project exists.

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

Regarding the programme 501/301 and the model project:

Advice and support with finding a job were provided by application trainings, etc. Additionally, the intention was to support transitions into permanent employment during the phase-out.

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

No counselling existed after the programme or module had finished.

6. Does follow-up exist after the programme or module?

The future position of the participant was surveyed on the last day of participation in the program and half a year later. Yearly reports to the financing institution document the career of the participants after they have completed the program. Distinctions are made between

- employment in the first labour market
- unemployed
- other (parental leave, therapy, incapacity to work, relocation, civilian service)
- unknown status.

The same procedure was applied to document the dropouts. Over 50 percent of the participants were offered continuing employment contracts in the respective company after the program had finished.

8. Do cooperations with companies exist?

If yes,

a) how is this organised?

See answer to question 8.3.

b) are companies anyhow rewarded for their willingness for cooperation or workplace provision?

The companies were selected after extensive visitations and they were provided with information on the project as well as a qualification plan for the participants (see BBJ Servis 2000, p. 31ff). Furthermore, they got a digressively shaped publicsubsidy to the indirect labour costs: In the first year of employment up to 100 percent, in the second year up to 75 percent and in the third year up to 50 percent of the agreed direct and indirect labour costs. Support was also provided by the central coordination of the Project.

9. Methods and tools of social integration

1. Is the certificate at the end of the programme or module recognised by

a) the companies?

b) the society?

Regarding the programme 501/301:

No final vocational education certificate existed, only a reference letter was issued. This was due to the employment status of the participant as opposed to the vocational training status. Regarding the continuing qualification, at least a proof of attendance was issued; in some classes even certificates or other documents proving successful participation were handed out (such as a driving license). The degree of recognition differed, but documentation via the qualification pass was possible.

Regarding the model project:

The final examination certificate was recognised, because the examination was carried out by the chamber of commerce. The orientation along the German vocational education guidelines ensured a recognised VET qualification (see BBJ Consult AG 2002, p. 2).

2. Does vocational / occupational mobility and cross company flexibility exist?

Because it was designed for small and medium enterprises, the mobility within the company was rather limited. Within the project several transnational exchanges took place. Some participants travelled to the US, Italy and Spain and Denmark to visit other companies and projects. This was financed partly by the project and partly with the support of the "Youth" and the Leonardo Programme of the European Union.

3. Is it possible to find a job for the target group / individual – providing employment for a longer period of time? In which sectors are members of the target group mainly employed?

The goal of both programs was to ensure the professional future of the participants through extensive cooperation with the companies. The long period that the participants were trained

within the company as well as the extensive education at external education providers during that time were expected to generate “sticking effects” for ensuring the future employment of the participant. This happened to be the case in more than 50 percent of the participants on average. The fields of occupation were not regulated. The most popular fields of employment were: sales and distribution (about 25percent), organisation, office and administration (23 percent) as well as service (about 10percent) (Data based on annual evaluation of a report from 2005.). A trend to the branches of trade, banking, insurance, media and catering could be observed at that time.

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

Compared to the situation at the beginning of the program improvement has been achieved. Because the participants have been integrated in the working process over a longer period, many of them changed, improved their social and occupational competences and were highly motivated. This resulted in higher flexibility and in some cases also led to extended mobility.

10. Pedagogical Personnel

1. What special qualifications do those dealing with the target group have (e.g. teacher, tutor etc.)?

Here, one needs to distinguish between the personnel who were employed by the company, the external education providers and the assistance provided by social workers.

Within the company: Because all participants have worked in different companies which they have chosen on their own, the qualification of the pedagogical personnel varied: Many small entrepreneurs who were involved in this program often did not have any formal pedagogical qualification at all. Another characteristic feature was that the companies usually did not have regular apprentices (see BBJ Servis 2000, p. 123). More than half of the companies had less than five employees. Those were mostly new companies, who had just existed for three to six years (BBJ Servis 2000, p.171).

At the external education provider, the personnel had completed a scientific university program in the field of economics, business administration or a combination of business and pedagogic studies.

The social workers who provided individual guidance had completed their studies to become social workers and already had some work experience.

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

For all three groups of personnel the following points were of relevance:

- Ability to deal with young adults who were not used to learning (anymore) and were not used to structured, organised learning processes. Some even had a negative education experience, had dropped out of an apprenticeship before and had generally made negative experiences. Some of the participants were socially and economically disadvantaged, were single parents, experienced in drugs, or had been released from prison.
- Implementation of didactic competences aiming at individualisation.
- Ability of individual guidance as well as group guidance (see BBJ Consult Info 2000).
- Intercultural competences
- Professional competences are very important, but primarily the social competence counts, e.g. sensitivity, tolerance, etc.

3. Where and how are these competences developed? How are they trained to be able to deal with the target group?

At the company: The personnel working with the participants at the company was advised and supported by social workers at the beginning of the project and during the whole period. Additionally, the external education provider helped with training of the regular employees in the model project.

At the external education provider: During the selection process of the personnel, attention was paid to the qualification and experience of the staff that was expected to train the participants. An interest in the target group was a precondition.

The social workers had been educated to work with related target groups during their studies or external training courses.

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

The social workers needed to have completed their studies and be experienced in working with the target group. Regarding the external education provider, see above.

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

At the company: The personnel was involved in decisions about accepting the participant, continuing the employment contract or the dismissal.

At the external education provider: The personnel was accompanying the learning process and was therefore working closely with the target group.

The social workers: They were involved in decisions about accepting the participant, about whether the participant remains in the program or not etc.

6. Is any special encouragement for the pedagogical personnel provided? If yes, in what from?

At the company: The personnel was advised by the social workers. This was provided through regular meetings as well as meetings when there were occurring problems.

At the external education provider: There were weekly meetings and talks about the education planning and special cases. Moreover, the external scientific steering has regularly evaluated the program and the model project, for instance with questionnaires for the participants. This way the personnel could reflect the demand.

The social workers: They were offered regular further training, team discussions and talks to supervisors.

7. How and how frequently is their further training organized?

At the company: With regard to the individual need. No general statement can be made.

At the external education provider: Twice a year the personnel were trained for one day. These trainings were conducted by external trainers and dealt with didactic methods for low-threshold training for the target group.

The social workers: Training was organised in targeted internal education, team discussions and talks to supervisors.

Conclusion:

Due to the long duration and the success of the programme 501/301 a large and broad choice of literature dealing with different aspects of the programme exists. Many of the publications were published by authors that were personnel of the central coordination, of the individual guidance, of the external education providers as well as of the scientific evaluation. Therefore, validity of the literature is high. It was also possible to speak to three former members of staff of the programme: the project manager from BBJ, a social worker that carried out individual guidance and a team member of IQ-Consult that offered training courses to participants. As the programme finished in 2006 it was unfortunately not possible to speak to the participants.

The success rate of the programme was the main reason for the long existence of the programme and different joint programs like the model project or others.

In its 18 years time, the programme had developed a high grade of professionalism; it was not static but remained flexible and underwent constant changes in order to be able to react to altered framework conditions.

It was suitable to integrate a broad variety of groups threatened by social exclusion such as migrants, single parents, young people with drug problems or a criminal background.

For many years, it was one of the central programmes for the target group in Berlin. It not only helped young people to integrate into employment but was also seen by small and medium sized enterprises as a good mean to recruit and train future staff, especially in the starting phase of the companies. Unfortunately, 501/301 does not exist anymore, however elements of it (in company training and employment, wage subsidies) remain important means for the integration of the target group into VET and employment.

Data sources:

Interviews:

Personal and e-mail interviews with former staff of BBJ (a social worker and the managing director of BBJ) and the educational institution IQ-Consult

Literature

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Entrance qualification “Chance plus” Deutsche Bahn AG (DB)

General information on the programme:

This programme is organised by the association “ZukunftPlus e.V.”, DB Training (DB stands for Deutsche Bahn = German railway) and business areas/practice companies and can take part in the so called “*entrance qualification*” (EQ). This entrance qualification programme aims at young people (until 25 years) without an apprenticeship training position. It is financially supported by the Federal Government. The internships last between six and twelve months. The great advantage of the programme is the "organised" establishment of a contact between the company and the younger generation without focusing on formal graduations and/or marks. Furthermore, companies should establish contacts with the young people and yet get motivated to offer apprenticeship training positions. To sum up, it offers on the one hand chances for young people, while on the other hand companies can register an image profit.

DB Mobility Logistics, assuring a new generation and human resources development

- control function
- develops the standards for the programme
- acquisition of internship-/training-places
- presentation of the programme

“ZukunftPlus” (educational career)

- employer of the youngsters
- employer of the social workers
- contractual partner of the companies
- cooperates with the Federal Employment Office

DB Training:

- responsible for the theoretical training
- conceiving and arranging of trainings
- compiling of training-data

Practice companies/particular departments of DB or external companies:

- selection of the trainees
- coordinating the programme for the trainees
- guarantee the transfer of EQ-contents

Dimensions

1. Curriculum/competence standards

1. Are there any specific conditions of the curriculum and the didactics?

The duration of the programme encloses maximum 12 months; besides, theoretical lessons and practice applications alternate.

A specialization in an activity field is planned.

The theoretical qualification encloses general education or repetition of school knowledge (Mathematics, German, English, data processing), lessons including professional contents as well as training in methodological and social competence.

The classes enclose 18 people at maximum. Exams or tests, individual planning talks and feedback talks should guarantee the continuous support of the participant. Besides, an individual guidance from a social worker should provide assistance in all areas and is guaranteed for the whole duration of the programme.

After the beginning in autumn theory lessons take place during one week. Then practical sessions alternate with intensive preparation on independent and self-organised work and theoretical qualification. At the end of February an interim report is given, then the change occurs again. The programme ends with a certificate of the chamber of commerce or the chamber of handicrafts.

2. Is access to the programme / module flexible / open?

Youngsters apply for the internship to the service centre personnel recruitment/vocational training service of the DB or receive the information on the programme by the labour agencies and are invited by them to the information and selection events. The vocational training service is doing the pre-selection of the trainees. Concerning the organised events, the practice companies/particular departments introduce the programme first and then carry out short interviews together with "ZukunftPlus". The decision of selection depends on the company that is organizing the practical part.

A cover letter, curriculum vitae and a copy of the school leaving certificate are necessary. The programme starts once a year (October/November) and applications can be sent from July on for the next year. Available places can be still replaced until the end of February. Because the training period ends at the end of August a replacement till the end of February still guarantees the minimum term of 6 months which a trainee must finish to receive a certificate of the chamber of commerce and industry or the chamber of handicrafts.

3. Is the curriculum competence-oriented / based?

Method competence and social competence as well as vocational orientation serve to prepare for an entrance in an apprenticeship training position or in a job. General education, among other things also in form of school knowledge repetition, complements the programme. Due to the fact that there is the possibility to choose a specific area one can call this support a "decisive competence".

4. Does the curriculum ensure the development of

- a) key competences and ?
- b) vocational competences?

a) The general education promotes the development of key competences, but also the trainings which are offered for the different areas (e.g. data processing and/or specific subjects). Among others, the training period strengthens for example competences like punctuality, service orientation and communication.

b) Vocational competences can be acquired in the chosen departments. This practical activity is complemented with theoretical lessons.

5. Do the programmes / modules allow flexibility

- a) concerning the demands of the individual?
- b) concerning the competences of the individual?
- c) concerning the interests of the individual?
- d) concerning the connectivity of programmes or modules?
- e) concerning partial and full qualifications?

a) The needs of the participants are taken into account by giving them the opportunity to specialise in one field. Besides, the individual guidance by a social worker provides assistance in all questions that concern the qualification.

b) One can suppose that the small learning groups of maximum 18 participants guarantee this flexibility.

c) see a)

d) "Chance plus" as EQ serves to reach a certain level of maturity for starting vocational training. The EQ modules that are defined are already contents of a future VET programme. Consequently, the connectivity is guaranteed. In the last years, about 75 percent of the young people that finished the EQ "Chance plus" could start vocational training or it was possible to realise a direct job entrance, mostly within departments of DB or within the other practice companies.

e) It was not possible to answer this question.

6. Is the curriculum work-process oriented?

The practical work allows getting to know the working processes, but also theoretical trainings are directly linked to it and often take place in the working processes.

7. Which forms / methods of evaluation are used

- a) to measure output requirements?
- b) to measure the acquisition of competences?
- c) to measure the competences and applicability of the pedagogical personnel?

a) and b) Exams or tests as well as feedback talks serve for the measurement of competences. DB training is testing regularly the teaching quality and is constantly improving it.

c) The association "ZukunftPlus e.V." coordinates the recruitment and deployment of the social workers.

2. Learning support system and infrastructure

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

There are information and selection events which are organised before the programme starts. Those are offered by the labour agencies and the vocational training service.

2. Is there anyone 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)?

Most youngsters were "in care" of the labour agency before starting "Chance plus". There their situation was already cleared. At the information and selection events the course of the programme is introduced, and the applicants can decide for themselves whether this way seems suitable for them or not. A screening of drugs is carried out immediately after the beginning of the internship by the association "ZukunftPlus". The recruitment of the participant is done by the vocational training service.

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

The social workers are always the contact persons for any kind of questions and therefore one can say that the individual needs are considered, too.

4. 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 etc.)?

Concerning initial problems the social workers try to offer support. Besides, there are external advisers, e.g. advisory centre of the town, church, etc. The social workers offer individual guidance to the young people. Drug consumption would be, for example, an obstacle to take part in the programme or would be a reason for dismissal during the programme.

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

The target group is not involved immediately in decisions. In the end, there is a questioning of the participants on the programme. It depends on the particular case whether suggestions find consideration for improving the programme.

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

In particular cases a job ticket is made available to offer mobility.

7. Is any assistance provided to remove psychological barriers of learning?

This support for overcoming learning difficulties is given by the social workers.

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

Individual pedagogical support is offered continuously by the social workers.

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

The individual feedback is provided by exams as well as by the feedback talks.

3. Preconditions of the target group before entering a programme/module (institutional level, learner level)

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

The association "ZukunftPlus e.V." hires the trainees, while the recruitment of participants is realised by the service centre personnel recruitment/service of vocational training of DB and the Federal Employment Office.

Besides, frequently asked questions of potential participants are available on the homepage so that everybody can clear for himself/herself if an application makes sense: If the following statements can be answered positively, the programme could fit:

"I would like to improve my chances for an occupational entrance

I am motivated to learn new things

I would like to get to know DB

I am reliable

I have finished secondary general school or intermediate secondary school

I am younger than 25 years

I am announced at the labour agency as "looking for an apprenticeship position" ("ausbildungsplatzsuchend").

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

Associated programmes for parents or other family members do not exist.

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

These basic skills are trained in the theoretical classes and by repeating general school knowledge (Mathematics, German, English, data processing).

It is necessary that the target group completed the secondary general school or intermediate secondary school.

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

If the target group does not have IT skills, this can be learned during the theoretical part of the qualification.

4. Process and support of acquisition of competences

1. What competences can be acquired during the programme or the module?

If yes, what specific methods are used?

Methodological and social competence (communication training, conflict management, application training) can be acquired during the programme.

Independence, responsibility, creativity, independency, friendliness, punctuality, engagement and interest are expected and also strengthened with the programme – those are relevant in the practical activity. The participants deal with real tasks; they are self-organised and involved in workplace-based learning. So they can recognise what happens depending on their behaviour. Concerning the theoretical lessons there are different methods applied: e.g. group work, lecture style classes.

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

The development of professional competences is possible, because the programme contains practical parts besides theoretical lessons, so that workplace-based learning can be realised. See 1.

5. Process and support of validation of competences

1. Are competences recognised / validated on the basis of how they are formed?

On the one hand the validation of competences is guaranteed by the learning success controls and feedback talks, on the other hand, the participants receive a certificate of the chamber of commerce and industry or the chamber of handicrafts. In addition, they get a certificate by the company for the practical part.

2. Are they tested in a valid and objective way?

The testing is made by tests/exams which are organised by DB Training.

3. Are special tools used to recognise / validate informally or non-formally acquired competences? If yes, what tools are used?

It is currently a process going on in which instruments/methods are developed for the recognition of informally acquired competences. This occurs in context of the project DECVET* (Federal Ministry of education and research). However, it is not possible to make any statements on this at the moment.

4. Who (what kind of organization) recognises / validates informally or non-formally acquired competences and how?

This is in development, see 3.

6. Methods and tools for encouraging learning

a) School-based

b) Out of school

1. Is counselling provided through the programme or module?

At the beginning of the programme there is a training which deals with "learning to learn". The individual guidance by the social workers which accompanies the programme perpetually helps to allow/organise a successful learning process. Trainers appropriate for target group as well as accordingly conceived trainings also serve for this.

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

At the beginning of the programme an individual assessment of the competences is carried out which is necessary for the development of the training. The individual planning talks also serve to allow for individualised learning.

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

The practice applications are an action-oriented method which allows workplace-based learning. Besides, project work has been integrated, for instance in August, 2008: On this occasion, participants of all "Chance plus"-classes have renovated the playground of a secondary general and intermediate secondary school in Berlin within two days by the construction of playground equipment (this school has entered a school cooperation with DB).

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

There are individual planning talks and feedback talks which deal with the actual state of development of the participants. Regular exams/tests also serve for this reflection.

7. Recognition of partial/ full qualifications

1. Are modules connected to develop vocational competences?

The participants acquire professional competence in the area which they have chosen at the beginning of the programme. It is also intended to mention this competence as a central theme in the certificate.

2. Does the programme or do the modules aim for the development of vocational competences?

The programme aims at the development of vocational competences in view of the fact that theoretical qualification and practice applications alternate and the participants choose an area that is most interesting to them. Besides, trainings which deal directly with the job demands often take place.

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

In some specialisation phases of the programme, the young person passes different departments. However, basically the participants specialise in one focus and are active in this field for the whole period.

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

The programme ends with a certificate for the practical part and a certificate of the chamber of commerce and industry or the chamber of handicrafts for enhancing the chances for a successful application in the future. At the end of February, the participants receive an interim report which they can use for an application for vocational training.

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

DB has partner companies which support the programme and give trainees a chance: DEVK, Vattenfall Europe, the vehicle park service of the armed forces. From 2009/2010 it is the established Protestant church Bavaria.

8. Employability

1. How are regional labour market demands taken into consideration when introducing a programme or module?

It is paid attention to offer places in those areas in which DB has a demand for recruits, so that a connection perspective is offered to the participants (apprenticeship training position). At the beginning of the programme, social responsibility was the main intention for the DB, meanwhile the programme serves the need for recruiting young people.

2. Are the demands of the regional labour market satisfied?

The training period is carried out only in those locations where practice companies/business areas of DB exist which also offer the possibility for vocational training.

3. Do any partnerships with companies exist to realise / help the transition from learning to working?

The practice companies/departments offer the possibility of a takeover in vocational training. Moreover, DB directs at the other companies to which it offers its support. As a countermove these companies offer a place for an internship.

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

The Internet main entrance, the practice companies/departments and the cooperation companies serve as a support possibility. Application trainings are offered. The social workers decisively support the application process for a vocational training.

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

Counselling after the end of the programme does not exist.

6. Does follow-up exist after the programme or module?

It is documented where the participant has applied and where he/she is offered a contract. Nevertheless, it is not allowed to mark the youngster as participant in the programme "Chance plus" (in the personnel system of DB), because this could have a discriminating effect. 75 percent of the young people that finished the EQ found an apprenticeship or succeeded in a direct job entrance.

7. Do cooperations with companies exist? If yes,

a) how is this organised?

b) are companies anyhow rewarded for their willingness for cooperation or workplace provision?

a) Direct cooperation partners are above all "ZukunftPlus" for the realization of the programme. DEVK (Assurance Company), Vattenfall Europe (Energy Company) and the armed forces vehicle park of service up to now were cooperation partners, which employed trainees. From 2009/2010 it will be the established Protestant church Bavaria. Indeed, other companies can be also involved in this programme and the DB offers its support.

b) The companies pay for their participation; because DB offers varied support possibilities (see on top).

9. Methods and tools of social integration

1. Is the certificate at the end of the programme or module recognised by

a) the companies?

b) the society?

The certificate of the chamber of commerce and industry or the chamber of the handicrafts is recognised by companies as well as by the society. The chambers have developed modules for the EQ defining the framework.

2. Does vocational / occupational mobility and cross company flexibility exist?

Vocational / occupational mobility is allowed, because part of the programme takes place in other departments. Other locations or other activity fields are not planned.

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

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

75% of the participants get an apprenticeship training position or a direct job entrance inside the DB or with other companies.

The target group is mainly active in business-service oriented occupations inside the DB – main focus: Customer contact, as an expert in the traffic service, for protection and security. It is possible to choose out of the following branches: Traffic occupations, business- service oriented occupations, commercial-technical occupations.

Year 2004/2005: 180 places in 9 locations

Year 2005/2006: 400 places in 15 locations

Year 2006/2007: 500 places in 15 locations

Year 2007/2008: 500 places in 15 locations
Year 2008/2009: 500 places in 13 locations

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

The participants learn how to write applications, where to find information concerning workplaces, which opportunities and wishes can be realised. Therefore, one can say that they become more flexible, concerning on the one hand mobility and on the other hand the different possibilities for a workplace or an apprenticeship.

10. Pedagogical personnel

1. What special qualifications do those dealing with the target group have (e.g. teacher, tutor etc.)?

Basically, social workers and trainers have to provide basic school knowledge, methodological competence and social competence. Integrated counselling and tailor-made teaching of contents are important functions that the pedagogical personnel fulfills. The personnel do not have to be shocked by strange comments of the participants. Besides, they can also represent employer's roles, e.g., with subjects like unpunctuality, burglary, etc. Instructors within the companies are available for the professional trainings. Feedback talks take place regularly. Besides, individual planning talks are carried out between the pedagogical personnel and the participant. The communication between the different pedagogical personnel plays an important role. One could assign this all together as social competence.

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

Empathy, communication skills, cooperation with the business segments (behaviour in the company, communication in the company) are necessary.

3. Where and how are these competences developed?
How are they trained to be able to deal with the target group?

There are internal workshops which provide professional contents. Besides, there is at the beginning of every year a workshop for the social education workers. After half of the time there is a workshop for them on the teaching of subjects, because this is the main focus of the programme in the 2nd half. Furthermore pre-experiences concerning the work with youngsters are necessary.

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

The association "ZukunftPlus e.V." selects the social workers. They must be able to cope with the requirements of the job. The managers of the departments observe how the social workers master the duties. Twice a year, workshops are organised for the social workers in which also the team leaders of the vocational training take part: On this occasion, exchange of views and the program standards are central topics.

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

The social workers and trainers should always have the possibility to have a contact person or to discuss important things if necessary by telephone.

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

Every four to six weeks, an opportunity for an exchange of views and experiences is given. Besides, there are nationwide meetings to exchange experiences. The trainers are prepared by internal workshops on the way of teaching professional contents. For the social workers there is a workshop at the beginning of the year. The main reason for these workshops is the permanent change of their work duties. For the 2nd workshop – about in the middle of the program – the topic of teaching is central.

7. How and how frequently is their further training organised?

Twice a year, further training takes place (see above). This is complemented with regional exchange of views/experiences. Administrative subjects, like labour legislation, law of contract, are over and over again on offer. The exchange of views/experiences comprises mostly also a central topic of interest, as for example case management of colleagues.

Conclusion

There was a high willingness of the DB to provide information on the programme. Much information could also be taken from the website (for DB, outer representation is important up to date).

The significance and representativeness of the information is limited by the fact that those which steer the programme as well as the participants in the programme have not been asked. Here the basis of information is merely the progress reports of participants which have been taken from the homepage. It is remarkable that the intention of this programme has changed – once the programme was started it was more an expression of social responsibility, now it serves as an instrument for the personnel recruitment.

The DB could potentially act as a partner for the testing phase in future, because the interview partners of DB were very supporting and open. At the moment, it is not possible to estimate which administrative difficulties would have to be overcome.

The integration of social workers in companies is innovative and needs to be positively emphasized. Furthermore, workplace-based learning is an important part in the programme so that the participants could test themselves and could learn directly in real working situations. The transformation of the theory lessons via lecture style classes and/or group work is not a new teaching and learning form. Nonetheless, other used methods cannot be raised because of the limited data. The individual guidance of the social workers is advantageous and helps to solve many (appearing) problems. It is absolutely positive that there is a strong link to the practical work. It would be innovative, if the members of the family were involved in such a programme and if the rates of disposition were more relevant, so that a transition in the education/occupation system can occur.

It is also not clear what will happen if the state support ends one day.

*In autumn, 2007 the Federal Ministry of education and research began the pilot's initiative "DECVET - development of an achievement point system in the professional education". In the focus of the initiative is the realisation of pilot projects for the systematic test of a transfer system and accreditation of learning results or competences from one education system to the other. The aim of the initiative is to identify and to test possible potentials in the interfaces all around the dual system and to make thereby a contribution to the rise of the horizontal and vertical permeability/flexibility (<http://www.decvet.net/>; 08.09.09).

Data sources

Literature

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Interviews with employees

Overview of the two programmes

Both programmes have a strong practical approach. They try to work with young people from difficult backgrounds under (close to) market conditions however with a pedagogic concept behind offering individual guidance. All of them have a network with companies that work on the labour market and that are more or less involved in the programmes.

The Programme 501/301 was carried out in a big city with hundreds of different stakeholders. It worked well as it was designed; to run it in a different setting might be possible with some adaptation. The second programme EQ- "*Chance plus*" is a good example for a big nationwide operating company group that is using one concept to train their future employees.

It is important to conclude that integration into VET and employment works best in Germany in a setting that is the closest as possible to real life VET and employment: this guarantees also motivation for the young people, disadvantaged or not.