

Implementierungsplan zur Jugendgarantie Österreich

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Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan Austria

Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (YGIP)

AUSTRIA

1 Context/Rationale

Young people have been in focus of the labour market and education policy in Austria for several years. Many measures were established to facilitate the pathway from education to working life, to reduce drop-outs and to ameliorate the system. Thus, the Austrian youth guarantee grew structurally and is consisting of a variety of measures, some of them already in place for several years.

In April 2013, the recommendation on establishing a youth guarantee was adopted by the council, which is another important step in reducing high youth unemployment across Europe. The council recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee recommends that member states

“ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

When designing such a Youth Guarantee scheme, Member States should consider overarching issues such as the fact that young people are not a homogeneous group facing similar social environments, as well as principles of mutual obligation and the need to address the risk of cycles of inactivity.”

The Youth Guarantee Plan is laying out the Austrian measures and programmes. In 2008, the Training Guarantee was established in order to give all young people a chance to complete a vocational education. Further programmes and strategies have been developed recently that aim at reducing drop-outs, increasing the permeability in the education system and allowing catching up an educational qualification. In the new government program the introduction of a mandatory education and formation (*Ausbildungspflicht*) is intended. A strategy to introduce this mandatory education and formation is in progress and the implementation is under discussion.

TARGET GROUP

The unemployment rate of 15-24-year-olds amounted to 8.7% in 2012 which is among the lowest in the EU. The average stock of youth registered as unemployed at the public employment service (Arbeitsmarktservice AMS) amounted to 42,744 in 2013. The vast majority of the young unemployed, 34,516 persons or 81%, were between 20 and 24 years old, 24,791 (58%) male. 45% have at most compulsory education, 42% finished an apprenticeship or a medium-level education and 12% at least an upper secondary education. The average duration of being registered unemployed was 69 days, 72 days for 20-24-year-olds and 57 days for up-to-19-year-olds. Thus, 70% of the young people stayed unemployed less than 90 days and 98% less than 180 days. (Source: AMS DWH) The risk of becoming unemployed (overall unemployment rate by educational attainment 2013, Source: BALLnet) is

considerably higher for those having at most compulsory education (20.9%), while it is much lower for those who finished secondary (depending on type of school 6.5-3.4%) or tertiary education (2.7%).

In 2012, on average 78,700 young people between 15 and 24 were neither in formal education nor employed, of which 49% were inactive and 51% unemployed according to LFS definition. This corresponds to 7.8% of 15-24-year-olds. (Source: LFS Statistics Austria) The NEET rate amounted to 6.5% in 2013. More details on the composition of this group are provided in the box below.

The Austrian early-school-leaving rate has been on a decreasing trend and stood at 7.6% in 2012. Also the number of persons with less than upper secondary education has declined. The share of persons with less than upper secondary education (age 30-34) has fallen from 14.3% to 10.6% in the last ten years, while the share of persons with tertiary education has risen from 21.0% to 26.0%.

Results of a study on supporting NEETs

A study¹ commissioned by the BMASK investigated the severity of the NEET status, potential risk factors and identified seven different groups among the NEETs:

- 21% of NEET are young people, who left the education system directly after compulsory school (year 9) and are actively looking for work,
- 20% young people in rural areas looking for an adequate job close to their domicile, who already completed an apprenticeship,
- 18% “older” (age 19-24) unemployed young people,
- 15% young mothers with migration background,
- 10% school graduates in waiting position (e.g. for compulsory military/civilian service or continuing education),
- 9% young people with illnesses and
- 8% young mothers without migration background.

About half of the persons concerned stay NEET for less than two quarters. 31% remain NEET at least three, 22% at least four and 15% at least five quarters. Due to these different target groups, key components to reach those groups or to avoid them becoming NEET are multifaceted. While some young people are just waiting for their studies or military/civilian service to start, other NEET-groups are more problematic and some very hard to reach. Risk factors that might lead to becoming NEET are in particular early school leaving, being born abroad, living in a city, low educational background and care responsibilities.

The study concludes that to cover these groups and their different individual problems, preventative measures (in the education system, social work and awareness building for illnesses), interventions at the transition from school to employment (more vocational guidance, training guarantee and youth coaching, financial incentives for the young people to participate in the projects and offers) and more measures to reintegrate NEET in the education system or labour market (especially low-threshold offers offering alternative ways of learning, youth and social work etc.) are needed.

¹ see ISW, IBE, JKU 2013. Studie zur Unterstützung der arbeitsmarktpolitischen Zielgruppe NEET. <http://isw-linz.at/projekt-qneetq-jugendliche>

INSTITUTIONS, INITIATIVES AND MEASURES

A wide range of institutions are involved in avoiding drop-outs from the education system, bringing young people back into education or integrating them in the labour market and providing social and vocational support. On a national level the key institutional actors are the ministries responsible for education, labour, social affairs, economy and youth, viz. the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK), the Federal Ministry of Education and Women (BMBF), the Federal Ministry of Families and Youth (BMFJ) and the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and the Economy (BMWFV). The Public Employment Service (AMS), the Federal Social Office (BSB) as well as the social Partners figure prominently. National measures are complemented by measures of the Federal States.

There exist a wide range of programs to promote the integration of young people into the education system and the labour market, ranging from well-developed services for vocational information including specialised vocational information centres, the nationwide placement service of the AMS for apprenticeship positions, subsidies for company-based apprenticeships, individual promotion within the AMS, to support of the transition from school to working life.

In the new government program the introduction of a mandatory education and formation (*Ausbildungspflicht*) is intended and currently under discussion. The aim is that every young person shall be supported in his or her decision on the (vocational) education pathway and shall attend and complete a formal education or formation up to the age of 18. Those who are in danger of dropping out should be supported individually to reach the highest possible educational attainment. Stepping stones on the way to a “mandatory education and formation” are/will be the Training Guarantee, Production Schools, Youth Coaching, targeted subsidies and quality-related measures in the apprenticeship system, Ready for Education and Training, subsidised employment projects and the promotion of the possibility to catch up an apprenticeship degree during full-time work.

The most-important nation-wide programmes are inter alia:

“Future for the Youth” (Aktion Zukunft Jugend): Offers young people from 19 to 24 e.g. intensified job placement and counselling of the AMS, (re-)training, (up-)skilling or special employment subsidies. The young unemployed should receive a job, a (re-)training/ (up-)skilling or subsidised employment within three months.

Training Guarantee (Ausbildungsgarantie): This guarantee ensures everyone up to 18 years and socially disadvantaged youth, slow learners and increasingly also education drop outs and young adults up to 24 years an apprenticeship position. If someone is not able to find an apprenticeship position in a company, he or she can enter into an apprenticeship programme in a supra-company apprenticeship training entity. This form of apprenticeship, including its final exam, corresponds completely to that of a company-based apprenticeship. As of December 2013, there were approximately 9,000 students enrolled in the supra-company apprenticeship training, which corresponds to 7.6 % of all apprentices. 92.4% of all apprentices complete their apprenticeship training in a company.

Youth Coaching (Jugendcoaching): Youth Coaching’s aim is to provide guidance and support to young people, who are facing difficulties in continuing or choosing their education pathways or that did

already drop out of the education system/labour market. It shall thereby reduce the number of early school leavers (ESL). Youth Coaching is thus a very important measure with regard to early intervention (gatekeeping function) as well as activation and (re-)integration (e.g. youth coaching is now also cooperating with prisons, to support and prepare young delinquents to re-enter the education system). It targets on the one hand pupils in their last year of compulsory schooling and on the other hand drop-outs up to the age of 19 (youth with disabilities up to the age of 25).

NEET Projects: For successful (re-)integration several innovative projects were established to enable NEETs to re-enter in the educational system or the labour market. For the most of these young people offers, such as supra-company apprenticeships, are too ambitious. The latest study shows that especially for this target group there is a need of a low-threshold service which can be provided in NEET projects. One example is the project “Login” in the province of Upper Austria:

PROJECT “LOGIN” (Upper Austria)

The aim of this project is to prepare young people to enter the labour market via an offer of low-threshold hourly work. The work offer is a self-determined, non-bureaucratic opportunity to earn money. Socio-pedagogical service is only provided when requested. Stabilisation, gaining self-esteem and a positive perception of work is the priority. The content of this project is a bike rental outlet, which comprises activities as repair and machine maintenance of bikes, development of corporate design, rental logistics, advertisement, public relations and event management.

Apprenticeship Coaching (*Coaching für Lehrlinge und Lehrbetriebe*) and measures targeted at apprentices: Apprentices as well as their employers may request supportive coaching, which provides assistance and advice during on-the-job training. The aim of this support program is to avoid apprentices dropping out of their formation and to ensure a successful completion of the apprenticeship. Qualified coaches will have initial talks with apprentices in question, identify perspectives and conduct mediation where required. Moreover, they assist with choosing refresher, (up-)skilling or advance training programmes and support apprentices in their preparation for the final apprenticeship examination.

In addition to the apprenticeship coaching, there is a broad offer of subsidies for preparatory courses for apprentices and quality-oriented measures within the training companies.

Ready for education and training (*“AusbildungsFit”*): The experiences from previous programs, in particular from Youth Coaching, show that many young people are lacking basic qualifications and social skills or are confronted with problems as e.g. health problems, financial distress or family problems, which detain them from starting a regular education or work. Thus, a comprehensive low-threshold offer is being developed targeted at disadvantaged young people. It will aim at (re-)integrating young people into the education system or the labour market by offering individual promotion. Cornerstones of AusbildungsFit are offers like traineeships in companies, coaching for those who need socio-pedagogical service, provision of basic knowledge and qualification in teaching through creativity as well as sports and pedagogical offers. In 2013, existing programs were selected, which serve as models for this program, and there will be a pilot of 17 projects in seven federal provinces. A nation-wide implementation is planned for 2015.

Production Schools (Produktionsschulen): Production schools are a good example of a practical approach at the interface between school and employment. The goal of production schools is to offer stabilisation, increase motivation, provide specialist knowledge and basic qualification. They are mainly targeted to young people between 15 and 19, but also open for young people up to the age of 25 with difficulties in finding a job. The training courses combine working in workshops, teaching through creativity and support by social workers. They also provide professional orientation. An example for a production school is “Spacelab” in Vienna:

PROJECT “SPACELAB” (Vienna)

Spacelab is a low-threshold labour market offer for young disadvantaged people up to 25 years. The goal is to offer stabilisation, increase motivation and provide career guidance. Social workers assist this target group in choosing a suitable individual career path. It is, as in project Login, possible to work on an hourly basis in groups in gardening, in creative workshops and media workshops to gain experience. The most important factor in this project is that young people are accompanied in a very individual way with little binding character.

Early School Leaving Strategy: The strategy that was established in 2012 aims at further reducing drop-outs and increase the number of persons with upper secondary education and more. Details see Chapter Early Intervention and Activation on p. 11.

Austrian Youth Strategy: The Youth Strategy of the Federal Ministry of Families and Youth is a process designed to strengthen and develop youth policy throughout Austria. The goal of this strategy is to bring together policies and measures for young people, to make them systematic and to optimise their effectiveness. It also aims to discover new fields of action and cooperation, to make new calls for action and to support these with concrete measures that can be readily implemented. The substantive tasks and organisation of the Youth Strategy are based on eight fields of action that are oriented toward the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018. Based on this fields of action three framework objectives were formulated and for each of those three measurable strategic goals along with recommendations for concrete measures. Among these strategic framework objectives most relevant to the plans to implement the Youth Guarantee in Austria is number 1: "Employment and Learning". The strategic goals in this regard are: In 2020 Austria will continue to be among the top three countries in the EU in youth employment (15 to 24 year-olds); In 2020 Austria will have the lowest rate of early school leavers in the EU; Austria will produce more company founders less than 30 years of age. Among the recommendations are measures such as "WIK:I – What I Know (and what I didn't learn in school)" as part of a low-threshold programme to create a skills portfolio for young people; A check list of quality internships for companies and young people; or to incorporate extracurricular youth work in school early warning systems when young people are at risk of leaving school early.

Measures supported by the ESF

In the Structural Funds period 2007-2013, the European Social Fund supported hard-to-place unemployed young people and in particular young people with a migration background, young people with considerable problems in the education and formation system and youth with difficulties in the transition to employment. Furthermore, young people could participate in activities that were not specifically designed for youth but for a wider target group. In 2007-2012 there were more than

210,000 participations of young people in measures supported by the ESF.

The measures for the structural Fund period 2014-2020 are still under negotiation with the European Commission and therefore still subject to change. Currently (beginning of 2014) several measures to support the implementation for the youth guarantee in particular for people with disabilities (e.g. transition management from school to work for young people at risk of exclusion, youth coaching) as well as measures to reduce school absenteeism and the number of early school leavers in the area of vocational education (e.g. school social work, learning support) are envisaged to be supported by the ESF.

The Austrian Dual System

The Austria vocational education system has an important function in easing the transition towards the labour market as it provides a practical and job-related education. The Dual System (apprenticeship system) is one important element of the vocational education system.

Apprentices may choose from more than 200 apprenticed trades in crafts, industry and services sectors. The duration of the formation varies according to the chosen trade and may last two to four years (usually three years). The apprentice spends 80% of his or her working time in a company and 20% in a vocational school. Every year, approximately 40% of every age group enters into the apprenticeship system after completion of the compulsory school (age 15).

At the moment there are about 120,000 apprentices, of which approximately 9,000 are based in supra-company-based apprenticeships. There exist a wide range of offers to support the apprenticeship system and ensure and increase the quality of the apprenticeships, as e.g. Coaching and Counselling for Apprentices and their Employers.

The tables in the subsequent sections report the most important recent nation-wide reforms and initiatives as well as planned reforms/initiatives. Thus, the list is not exhaustive. Besides the measures described in more detail, there exist e.g. several initiatives and services on different levels for young people with migration backgrounds, programmes to encourage young women to take up a job or a vocational education in male-dominated professions, programmes for young people with disabilities and many more.

The aim of the current strategy is, on the one hand, to optimize the system that is facilitating the school-to-work transition and to reach all young people that have problems in finding their pathway. On the other hand, it is important to increase the permeability and allow ways to re-enter the education system. Before the establishment of the European Youth Guarantee young people and their employment and education prospects were already in focus of the Austrian labour market and education policy. The guarantee gives the possibility to enhance the co-operation between institutions and lead the focus to fast action and outreach to those, who are less reached by already existing measures and initiatives.

2 Implementing the Youth Guarantee Scheme at national level

2.1 Formulation of the Austrian Youth Guarantee

The Austrian Youth Guarantee consists of two key measures: the Training Guarantee and Future for the Youth. Every young person up to the age of 18 is guaranteed an apprenticeship position after registering with the AMS. Young people up to 25 receive an offer in line with the council recommendation (as an apprenticeship position, employment, education or formation or subsidised employment) by the AMS within a period of three months.²

In addition to this measures a focus is placed on outreach activities to reach those young people not registered within the AMS and help them to find a (further) education or get registered with the AMS (as e.g. youth coaching and low-threshold offers). Furthermore, strategies have been developed to ease the school-to-work transition and reduce drop out (e.g. ESL strategy).

2.2 Partnership approaches

On national level the key institutional actors are the ministries responsible for education, labour, social affairs, economy and youth, viz. the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK), the Federal Ministry of Education and Women (BMBF), the Federal Ministry of Families and Youth (BMFJ) and the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and the Economy (BMWFW). The Public Employment Service (AMS), the Federal Social Office (BSB) as well as the Social Partners likewise figure prominently. The Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan was set up in an inter-ministerial process with the key actors involved – BMWFJ (hence BMWFW and BMFJ), BMUKK (hence BMBF), BMASK and AMS. The Federal Social Office (BSB), Social Partners, the coordination office of assistance for interface between school and work (Bundes KOST Bundesweite Koordinierungsstelle Übergang Schule- Beruf) as well as the coordination of federal states were likewise consulted when drafting the YGIP.

To implement and monitor the measure „Youth Coaching“, an inter-ministerial steering group was set up. The steering group consists of members of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, the Ministry of Education and Women as well as the Federal Social Office. There are steering committees for Youth Coaching and “AusbildungsFit” in each province of Austria. Participants are stakeholders of the educational system and labour market. A nation-wide office of assistance for interface between school and work (Bundes KOST) coordinates the interface between school and work for young people.

² The legal basis is to be found in AMMSG §38a: Die regionale Geschäftsstelle hat weiters dafür zu sorgen, dass arbeitslosen Personen, die das 25. Lebensjahr noch nicht (...) vollendet haben, wenn ihnen nicht binnen drei Monaten eine zumutbare Beschäftigung angeboten werden kann, die Teilnahme an einer Ausbildungs- oder Wiedereingliederungsmaßnahme ermöglicht wird.

TABLE 2.2: KEY ORGANISATIONS THAT WILL SUPPORT AND DELIVER THE YOUTH GUARANTEE SCHEME

Name of key organisations	Type of organisation	Level of responsibility	Role in implementing the Youth Guarantee scheme	Ensuring the success of the partnerships
Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection BMASK	Public authority	National	Coordination of the implementation, labour market policy	
Federal Ministry of Education and Women BMBF	Public authority	National	Implementation with regard to the educational system Cooperation with the BMASK and coordination of Youth Coaching within the school system	
The Federal Ministry of Families and Youth BMFJ	Public authority	National	Youth strategy	
Federal Ministry of Science, Research and the Economy BMWFW	Public authority	National	Implementation with regard to the apprenticeship system	
Public Employment Service AMS	Public authority	National, regional, local	Active labour market policies for young people, training guarantee, vocational orientation	
Federal Social Office BSB	Public authority	National, regional	Youth coaching, offering support to disabled young people	
Chamber of Commerce WKO	Social partner	National, regional, local	inter alia strongly involved in the apprenticeship system	
Chamber of Labour AK	Social partner	National, regional, local	inter alia strongly involved in the apprenticeship system	
Apprenticeship Offices (Lehrlingsstellen) LST	Public authority	regional	appropriate authority and service institution for training companies	
National Youth Council B-JV	Social partner	National	Representative body of children and young people in Austria and "network" of national youth organizations	

Centre of Competence for Open Youth work in Austria bOJA	Network	National, regional, local	Service and networking agency for Open Youth Work in Austria and thus offering support to (disadvantaged) young people	
Austrian Youth Information Centres BÖJI	Network	National, regional, local	A first point of contact for young people and all their questions, also regarding i.a. employment, training, education	

2.3 Early intervention and activation

Policy measures for early intervention are becoming more and more important. Aim is to provide support for those who have problems in the education or apprenticeship system and thereby avoiding drop-outs. There exist many offers targeting at groups with different needs as socially disadvantaged youth, young persons with disabilities or young people lacking basic skills. Important strategies in this field are the National Strategy to tackle early school leaving (ESL) and the Lifelong Learning (LLL) Strategy (see below).

Information about relevant education pathways and career opportunities are of immense importance for the individual planning of a young person's career. Since 2009, a visit to a Careers Information Centre (*Berufsinformationszentren* BIZ), e.g. at the Public Employment Service (AMS), has been part of the compulsory subject of career orientation for pupils in years 7 and 8 of school. In 2012, the 66 Career Information Centres of the AMS were used by around 470,200 persons (thereof 103,000 young people under 21). There exist many different projects that provide vocational orientation, as e.g. "Berufsfindungsbegleitung" in Styria, which is described in the Box below.

PROJECT: „BERUFSFINDUNGSBEGLEITUNG“ (Career Choice Tutoring, Styria)³

The Project Berufsfindungsbegleitung (BFB) in the province Styria is a best practice in providing vocational orientation for young people. It had existed as pilot already since 1999 and covers whole Styria (apart from Graz) since 2010. It assists young people in their education and career choice, helps young apprenticeship seekers and their parents in choosing the appropriate profession and supports young people also at the beginning of their apprenticeship. It cooperates with companies, schools and other partners and has a wide range of offers from individual counselling to larger events and workshops.

Recently implemented measures focus at facilitating the transition from lower secondary school to upper secondary school or the apprenticeship system by providing vocational orientation and if needed social support and basic skills. The new measures increasingly try to support the young people individually to address each person's needs. Key initiative is Youth Coaching, which is on the one hand

³ <http://www.berufsorientierung.at/>

targeted at young people in their last years of compulsory school and on the other hand reaching out to NEETs up to age 19 not registered with the AMS. A focus is also on low-threshold offers to bring those furthest away closer to the labour market or the education system (see also 2.4).

Youth work and Early Intervention and Activation

Youth work, voluntary activities, active citizenship, and non-formal and informal learning can play an important and complementary role by bringing added value for all young people, especially those in a NEET situation, in the transition to the labour market: building bridges between education and employment systems, complementing the formal education system, providing self-confidence, social capital and self-development, and increasing soft and technical skills that enhance employability.

Social investment in people's skills and capacities throughout their lifetime to improve their opportunities to integrate in the labour market and society is crucial. All policy instruments, measures and actions should be coordinated and implemented at local, regional, national and European levels and should include a wide range of stakeholders in the design and delivery of youth social inclusion measures.

Prevention should be a priority in order to avoid increasing the number of young people getting into a NEET situation and to break the inter-generational cycle of social exclusion. A proactive approach involving family, early child educators, schools, especially secondary and vocational education, training and non-formal learning providers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially youth organizations, youth workers, parents and other stakeholders is needed to ensure early intervention to avoid young people getting into a NEET situation.

Aims in the area of prevention are to

- Promote access to adequate, affordable, accessible and high quality services, such as early childhood education and care, housing, health and social services to prevent young people getting into or remaining in a NEET situation.
- Develop and implement new and individual tailored approaches, such as detached and/or outreach youth work, for better social inclusion of young people in a NEET situation. Make full use of the potential of youth work to provide self-confidence and self-development to young people and to contribute to the reduction of early school leaving.
- Encourage and support high quality guidance including career information, information on rights at work, employment and education prospects, free movement possibilities and more comprehensive advice and support for all young people, especially for those at risk of getting into a NEET situation, and their families.
- Strengthen the capacity of youth organizations, youth work and other forms of inclusion as a means of participation and use their potential to foster the social inclusion of young people in a NEET situation.
- Encourage local initiatives and social cohesion plans to develop specific actions targeted to young people in a NEET situation in order to (re)integrate them in the local communities.

Strategies in the field of Early Intervention and Activation:

National Strategy to tackle Early School Leaving (ESL, 2012)

Austria adopted the "National Strategy on Early School Leaving" in 2012. The target of the Europe 2020 strategy to reduce the ESL rate to less than 10 % is already achieved (2012: 7.6 %). To further decrease ESL, the national strategy tries to raise awareness among school leaders, representatives of school

boards and responsible stakeholders; it aims at bringing together different measures and different institutions to combat ESL in a more effective and coordinated way.

The newly developed national strategy on ESL refers to the strategic framework of the European Commission with its three pillars of prevention, intervention and compensation. It aims to interconnect measures at the structural level, measures at school level and measures to support students at risk. Its main focus is on prevention and intervention rather than on compensation. It also comprises measures that are directed at the individualisation of learning and teaching, the implementation of educational standards, the new competence-based and partly standardised university entrance exam (Matura) and a focus on quality assurance. The implementation of educational standards and the reinforcement of pedagogic and student-centred approaches are under way. Educational standards are linked to competence-oriented teaching. These activities are embedded in overall quality initiatives which try to encompass the development of schools and teaching quality as well as monitoring and improving the outcomes. There are also initiatives to tackle absenteeism by a new law, which regulates the cooperation of professionals of different support systems like counselling teachers, school psychologists, social workers, youth coaches and representatives from school boards

Strategy for Lifelong Learning

Not only education policy issues, but also labour market and employment policy, social and family policy, science policy, integration, finance and regional policies are essential determinants of the possibilities and conditions for lifelong learning (LLL). The LLL:2020 Strategy is the first to unite all the policy fields and players concerned under an overarching common objective and to involve all learning areas – ranging from early childhood education to adult education in retirement. Ten points of action⁴, including related goals and measures, have been defined and their current status has been identified. Based on these points of action, operational interim goals and milestones will be defined and reviewed every year. The Task Force LLL:2020 is composed of representatives of the four leading Ministries charged with the coordination of the entire process. The National Platform LLL:2020 in turn includes all relevant stakeholders: alongside representatives of the ministries representatives of the social partners, Federal States, municipalities and local communities, universities, adult education establishments, public employment service and scientists can be found on this platform.

This National Platform was formally established in April 2012 and adopted a widely agreed working approach and procedure to implement the LLL:2020 Strategy based on the 22 key areas for specific

⁴ Points of Action of the LLL Strategy:

1. Strengthening of pre-school education as a longer-term fundamental requirement.
2. Basic education and equity of opportunities in school and initial training systems.
3. Free programmes offering adults a second chance to complete previously missed education cycles and acquire basic skills and competences.
4. Expansion of alternative routes into the world of work for young people.
5. Measures to improve reorientation in education and career with due regard to work-life balance.
6. Enhancement of community education approaches using community-based entities and organised civil society.
7. Promotion of learning-friendly work environments.
8. Continued education to ensure employability and competitiveness.
9. Enhanced quality of life through education in post-employment phase.
10. Procedures to recognise non-formal and informal learning experiences and competences in all education sectors.

action (clusters of measures) proposed by the Task Force. Work on seven of these areas, involving a total of 32 measures for target attainment, had begun by June 2013. Working groups representing all relevant stakeholders have been established within the National Platform to address these key areas. The National Platform is required to present an annual monitoring report to the Austrian Council of Ministers. In view of the multitude of stakeholders and measures involved, reporting is intended to provide an overview of the progress made in implementation and to support the further development of this strategy in order to ensure target attainment.

TABLE 2.3: KEY REFORMS AND INITIATIVES TO ENSURE EARLY INTERVENTION AND ACTIVATION

Name of the reform/initiative	Key objective(s)	Target group, including no of people covered (if available)	Scale	Name and role of organisation in the lead and cooperating partners	Timetable for implementation	Implementation cost, if applicable
MAIN REFORMS AND PLANNED REFORMS						
1) Further development of the quality-focused subsidies and supporting-instruments within apprenticeship system (including different measures)	Providing a broad and standardised quality-management structure within the dual VET-system, aiming at avoiding drop outs and ensuring successfully completed vocational trainings	Apprentices, companies	National	BMWFW, BMASK, WKO, AK, LST	Start in 2014	
2) Strategy on Early School Leaving <i>(Nationale Strategie zur Verhinderung frühzeitigen (Aus-)Bildungsabbruchs)</i>	Further reduction of ESL in Austria (2012: 7.6 %)	Students at risk of dropping out, migrant students with low SES or students with multi-layered problems	National (all nine provinces)	BMBF	Until 2020	No extra costs involved, youth coaching as new measure is funded by BMASK
3) New upper secondary level <i>(Oberstufe NEU)</i>	Avoiding class repetitions through a module system	Students in upper secondary education	National	BMBF	Complete implementation in 2017/18	
4) Improvements in Career Counselling <i>(IBOBB)</i>	Improvements in the transitional processes between lower and upper secondary education, between school and labour market	All students in 7th and 8th grade and both in the upper academic tracks (11 and 12 grade) and vocational tracks (12 and 13 grade)	National	BMBF	Ongoing	Integrated with mainstream education

5) Introduction of educational standards (<i>Bildungsstandards</i>)	Long term securing of basic competences in the subjects German, Mathematics and English	Students in primary and lower secondary schools	National	BMBF	Legislation for the introduction of educational standards in 2009, testing of standards since 2012	Budget is integrated with the funding of the Federal Institute for Educational Research, Innovation and Development (BIFIE)
6) New university entrance exam (<i>neue kompetenzorientierte, teilstandardisierte Reifeprüfung</i>)	Introduction of a partly centralized and competence-oriented and partly standardized final exam at upper secondary level	Students at the end of upper secondary education	National	BMBF	Complete implementation in 2014/15 (academic track) and in 2015/16 (vocational track)	
7) Support measures at vocational schools for students at risk (<i>Verminderung der Drop-Out-Rate an kaufmännischen Schulen</i>)	Reduce the transition problems from compulsory schools to higher schools, reduce a high number of dropouts due to language and linguistic deficits in German	Students in secondary education (vocational Schools and collages) at risk of dropping out	National	BMBF	Start 2008	Budget is integrated with the European Social Funds (ESF)
8) Transition class (<i>Übergangsstufe</i>)	Reduce the number of drop outs due to severe problems in basic skills (German, English and mathematics)	Students in secondary education (vocational Schools and collages) at risk of dropping out	National	BMBF	Start 2010	Budget is integrated with the European Social Funds (ESF)
9) Competence oriented, self-dependant learning (<i>Kompetenzorientiertes, eigenverantwortliches Lernen – KOEL</i>)	Support students having problems in learn management, time management, self-management etc.	Students in secondary education (vocational Schools and collages) at risk of dropping out	National	BMBF	Since 2011	Budget is integrated with the European Social Funds (ESF)

MAIN INITIATIVES AND PLANNED INITIATIVES						
10) youth coaching <i>(Jugendcoaching)</i>	Reducing ESL and drop-outs, providing guidance	Pupils in the last two years of compulsory schools, NEET up to the age of 18	National	BMASK, BMBF, BSB	Since 2013 Gradual implementation since 2012	Planned budget: EUR 20m 2014: approx.: EUR 25m
11) Apprenticeship coaching <i>(Coaching für Lehrlinge und Lehrbetriebe)</i>	Avoiding drop-outs from the apprenticeship system, providing support to apprentices	Young people doing an apprenticeship (approx. 125,000) and companies offering apprenticeship positions	National	BMWFV, BMASK, WKO, AK, LST	Gradual implementation since 2013	2013: EUR 200,000 Planned budget for 2014: approx.: EUR 3m
12) Free of Charge preparatory courses for the final apprenticeship examination <i>(unentgeltliche Vorbereitungskurse auf die Lehrabschlussprüfung)</i>	Supports apprentices to pass their final apprenticeship examination	Apprentices	National	BMWFJ, BMASK, WKO, AK, LST	2013/14	Planned budget for 2014: approx.: EUR 7m
13) Education-related employment career monitoring <i>(Bildungsbezogenes Erwerbskarrierenmonitoring)</i>	Identifying problem groups and educational / professional pathways: Data is gathered on the pupils' educational and professional careers after having received a degree or leaving education. (due to data availability and the length of the observation period time lag of 2 years)	All young people, starting with those leaving school or receiving a degree in 2009/10	National	BMASK, AMS, Statistik Austria	Since 2012; analysis is continuously being extended	

14) Free catch up education <i>(Nachholen Bildungsabschluss)</i>	Providing the access to basic qualification for those that have not completed lower secondary education	Persons that did not complete lower secondary education.	National	BMBF, Federal States	Since 2012	
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2.4 Supportive measures for labour market integration

A wide range of supportive measures has been established. Stepping stones are the Training Guarantee that guarantees every young person an apprenticeship position as well as Future for the Youth. §38a AMMSG ensures that every unemployed up to 25 is either offered an employment position or the possibility to pursue a further education or a integration program (as e.g. subsidised employment). Other offers are low-threshold offers as e.g. production schools or ready for education and training as well as offers for catch-up education. Many measures are described in Chapter 1, for details see table below.

Supportive measures for labour market integration in the area of education, training and non-formal learning:

- Widen access to second-chance education and support the acquisition and/or development of skills and competences that meet the needs of the labour market.
- Use the Erasmus + programme as a supportive instrument to acquire social and civic competences and skills, and strengthening the mobility and employability of young people.
- Develop partnerships among public and private employment services, career guidance services, other specialized youth services (NGOs, youth centers and associations) that help to smooth the transition from unemployment, inactivity, education or training into work.

In addition to these measures aiming at integrating young people in the labour market as employees and supporting education and formation, there exists a business start-up programme for unemployed. The programme aims at supporting unemployed workers in their efforts to enter self-employment. Taking up self-employment can help these workers create permanent jobs which ensure economic survival on the one hand, and increase the number of job openings on the other, as newly established businesses might expand and create jobs filled from the ranks of the unemployed. Approximately 5% of all participants are less than 25 years old.

TABLE 2.4: KEY REFORMS AND INITIATIVES TO ENABLE LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION

Name of the reform/initiative	Key objective(s)	Target group, including no of people covered (if available)	Scale	Name and role of organisation in the lead and cooperating partners	Timetable for implementation	Implementation cost, if applicable
MAIN INITIATIVES AND PLANNED INITIATIVES						
15) Fit for Education and Training <i>(AusbildungsFit)</i>	giving young people a second chance to acquire previously missed basic qualifications and social skills	Young people lacking basic qualifications	Pilot projects, In 2015: planned nation-wide implementation	BMASK, BSB	Pilot phase 2014, planned nation-wide implementation in 2015	Planned Budget: EUR 11m in 2014
16) Integrated vocational training <i>(Integrative Berufsausbildung)</i>	Providing vocational education to all young people, also to those who are not able to complete a fully-fledged apprenticeship within a certain time frame	individuals with special educational needs, individuals who have not finished their schooling at general lower secondary schools or have finished schooling with too many negative marks; people with disabilities within the meaning of the Disability Employment Act (BeinstG) and/or the Federal Provinces' disability legislation; or socially disadvantaged individuals	National	BMWFW, BMASK, AMS, Federal Social Office (BSB <i>Bundessozialamt</i>)	Since 2003	-
17) Future for the Youth <i>(Aktion Zukunft Jugend)</i>	To provide an offer by the AMS to young people aged 19-24 within 3 months	Young people registered at the AMS aged 19-24	National	BMASK, AMS	Since 2009	-

<p>18) Training Guarantee (<i>Ausbildungsgarantie</i>)</p>	<p>Providing VET to all young people, offering additional apprenticeship positions, targeting helping them completing apprenticeships resp. changing in a company for continuing the training</p>	<p>Registered apprenticeship-seekers who completed compulsory schooling and are unable to find suitable company-based training slots despite enhanced placement efforts, or who dropped out of an apprenticeship; young people up to the age of 18, socially disadvantaged youth, slow learners, and increasingly also education dropouts and young adults (19 to 24 years of age).</p>	<p>National</p>	<p>AMS, BMASK, BMWFW, provinces</p>	<p>Since 2008</p>	<p>Planned Budget: Yearly cost ~ 175,000,000 €</p>
<p>18a) Bonus for companies which take up apprentices from supra company training entities</p>	<p>A lump-sum subsidy of € 1,000 was introduced that is paid to every employer taking on an apprentice of a supra-company training entity. This shall increase the possibility to change from supra-company apprenticeship to a regular apprenticeship position.</p>	<p>companies which take up apprentices from supra-company training entities</p>	<p>National</p>	<p>BMWFW, BMASK, WKO, LST</p>	<p>Since 09/2013</p>	

19) Production Schools (<i>Produktionsschulen</i>)	Low-threshold offer for young people to help them finding their vocational orientation and acquire basic skills	Young people aged 15 who have not completed initial education and training; young people with employment handicaps, social disadvantages and/or adjustment difficulties, in particular apprenticeship and school dropouts	National, provinces	BMASK, AMS, provinces	Since 2001	Planned Budget: 2013: EUR 7.5m 2014 EUR 7.5m
20) Adult Education Initiative	Compensation for missing certificates	People aged 16 and older who have not completed lower secondary school	National, provinces	BMBF, provinces	2012-2014, Prolongation from 2015 is planned	
21) Business start-up programme and business start-up subsidy (<i>Unternehmegründungsprogramm und Gründungsbeihilfe</i>)	support unemployed workers in their efforts to enter self-employment	Unemployed individuals (irrespective of their entitlement to UI benefits) – as well as job-seekers who are still employed but will lose their job in the foreseeable future – who intend to enter self-employment, have a concrete business idea and appropriate qualifications	National	BMASK, AMS		2012: EUR 11.1m (subsidy), EUR 4.8m (business start-up programme); approx. 5% of the participants are less than 25 years old
22) WIK:I – What I Know (and what I didn't learn in school)	create a skills portfolio for young people with a focus on skills acquired in informal settings, such as out of school youth work and activities	All young people in Austria that are willing to take part in short (small) group workshops or individual counselling at youth organizations or youth information centres	National	BMFJ	Development of concept and model in 2013/2014; roll out begins in 2014	Development and model (2013): 17.000,- Roll out (2014): 30.000,- (planned)

3 Funding the Youth Guarantee

In 2012, € 430m were spent on active labour market policy for young people. Additional € 160m were spent on subsidies for the apprenticeship system and €24m on measures for young people of the federal social office. Thus, in sum € 610m are spent to integrate young people into the labour market. Defining the budget on implementing this comprehensive strategy is, however, difficult as it also concerns gradual reforms in the educational system, where no separately listed costs are available.

TABLE 3: FUNDING THE YOUTH GUARANTEE

Name of reform/initiative	Years for which funding is planned	Sources & levels of funding					No. of beneficiaries planned (when applicable)			Cost per beneficiary (when applicable)
		EU/ESF/YEI	National Funds, including co-funding	Regional/Local Funds	Employer Funds	Other (please specify)	Male	Female	Total	
MAIN REFORMS AND PLANNED REFORMS										
1) Further development of the quality-focused subsidies and supporting-instruments within the apprenticeship system (including different measures)	Open-ended (ancillary labour costs)				approx. € 170m / year (IEF)				approx. 125.000 apprentices	
2) Strategy on Early School Leaving	See 10)									
3-9)	No separate numbers available; part of the education system									
MAIN INITIATIVES AND PLANNED INITIATIVES										
10) youth coaching (<i>Jugendcoaching</i>)			2014: € 26m						Planned beneficiaries: 35,000	
11) Apprenticeship coaching (<i>Coaching für Lehrlinge und Lehrbetriebe</i>)					2014: € 3m (IEF)				5,000-10,000 (full implementation)	

Name of reform/initiative	Years for which funding is planned	Sources & levels of funding					No. of beneficiaries planned (when applicable)			Cost per beneficiary (when applicable)
		EU/ESF/YEI	National Funds, including co-funding	Regional/Local Funds	Employer Funds	Other (please specify)	Male	Female	Total	
12) Free of Charge preparatory courses for the final apprenticeship examination <i>(unentgeltliche Vorbereitungskurse auf die Lehrabschlussprüfung)</i>					2014: € 7 m (IEF)				Approx. 30,000 (full implementation)	
13) Education-related employment career monitoring <i>(Bildungsbezogenes Erwerbskarrierenmonitoring)</i>	Not applicable									
14) Free catch-up education <i>(Nachholen Bildungsabschluss)</i>	No separate numbers available; part of the education system									
15) Fit for education and training <i>(AusbildungsFit)</i>			2014: € 12m						2014: 730	

Name of reform/initiative	Years for which funding is planned	Sources & levels of funding					No. of beneficiaries planned (when applicable)			Cost per beneficiary (when applicable)
		EU/ESF/YEI	National Funds, including co-funding	Regional/Local Funds	Employer Funds	Other (please specify)	Male	Female	Total	
16) Integrated vocational training (<i>Integrative Berufsausbildung</i>)	Not applicable (2 different models of IBA)		Not applicable						In 2013: approx. 5,000	
17) Future for the Youth (<i>Aktion Zukunft Jugend</i>)	Open-ended, budget of AMS		€ 142 m (for qualification and employment measures, 2013)						Number of admitted trainings in 2013: 53,845 Number of started Jobs in 2013: 95,500	
18) Training Guarantee (<i>Ausbildungsgarantie</i>)			2013: € 175 m total € 150 m AMS € 25 m Länder	€ 25 m					2014: approx. 11,000	
19) Production Schools (<i>Produktionsschulen</i>)			2013: € 7.5 m						In 2013: 2.899	

Name of reform/initiative	Years for which funding is planned	Sources & levels of funding					No. of beneficiaries planned (when applicable)			Cost per beneficiary (when applicable)
		EU/ESF/YEI	National Funds, including co-funding	Regional/Local Funds	Employer Funds	Other (please specify)	Male	Female	Total	
20) Adult Education Initiative	No separate numbers available; part of the educational system									
21) Business start-up programme and business start-up subsidy <i>(Unternehmensgründungsprogramm und Gründungsbeihilfe)</i>	Open-ended, budget of AMS		2013: € 260,000						In 2013: Approx. 470	
22) WIK:I – What I Know (and what I didn't learn in school)			2014: € 30,000						In 2014: 500	

4 Assessment and continuous improvement of schemes

TABLE 4.1: ASSESSMENTS FOR THE (NON-FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF) STRUCTURAL REFORMS⁵

Name of the reform	Expected change	Means through which change will be measured	Source of information / planned evaluations
1) Further development of the quality-focused subsidies and supporting-instruments within the apprenticeship system (including different measures)	increasing the number of skilled workers	Evaluation studies	Statistics of apprenticeships; DWH for apprenticeship training-subsidies;
2) Strategy on Early School Leaving	Further decrease of ESL rate	Planned Evaluation of Youth Coaching as part of measurement of success of the strategy	ESL benchmark Monitoring at school level (in discussion)
3) New upper secondary level (<i>Oberstufe NEU</i>)	Further decrease of grade repetition	Monitoring of grade repetition rate	Educational statistics
4) Improvements in Career Counselling (<i>IBOBB</i>)	Improved offers in career counselling	Applied whole-school concepts for career counselling	
5) Introduction of educational standards (<i>Bildungsstandards</i>)	Improvements in educational outcomes		Testing of educational standards, international assessments
6) New university entrance exam (<i>neue kompetenzorientierte, teilstandardisierte Reifeprüfung</i>)	Comparable outcomes at end of upper secondary level	Implementation of the new university entrance exam	
7) Support measures at vocational schools for students at risk (<i>Verminderung der Drop-Out-Rate an kaufmännischen Schulen</i>)	Reduced dropout rates in vocational schools	Monitoring at school level	
8) Transition class (<i>Übergangsstufe</i>)	Improvements in transition between lower and upper secondary schools	More education support for students at risk	

⁵ Please include all reforms listed in the tables above.

9) Competence oriented, self-dependant learning <i>(Kompetenzorientiertes, eigenverantwortliches Lernen – KOEL)</i>	Better outcomes & improved transitional processes	Implementation of innovative pedagogical methods	
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TABLE 4.2: ASSESSMENTS OF THE INITIATIVES AND OF THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF REFORMS ⁶

Name of the initiative / reform	Target population (or equivalent)	Population (or equivalent) actually reached	Outcome for population	Sources of information
1) Further development of the quality-focused subsidies and supporting-instruments within the apprenticeship system (including different measures)	Concerning all apprentices in Austria (approx. 125.000)	all apprentices	Support for completing the vocational training	Statistics of apprenticeships; DWH for apprenticeship training-subsidies; AMS DWH
2) Strategy on Early School Leaving	All students at risk between 15 and 24	No data available	Successful Completion of upper secondary education	ESL benchmark
3) New upper secondary level <i>(Oberstufe NEU)</i>	All students at upper secondary level	All students at upper secondary level	Reduced grade repetition	Educational statistics
4) Improvements in Career Counselling <i>(IBOBB)</i>	All students between 13 and 19 years	No data available	No data available	
5) Introduction of educational standards <i>(Bildungsstandards)</i>	Students at grade 4 and 8	Tested students		Testing of educational standards
6) New university entrance exam <i>(neue kompetenzorientierte, teilstandardisierte Reifeprüfung)</i>	Students at end of upper secondary level	All students who take the final exam at upper secondary level	Comparable, partly standardized competences	
7) Support measures at vocational schools for students at risk <i>(Verminderung der Drop-Out-Rate an kaufmännischen Schulen)</i>	Students in vocational tracks	Students at risk, number varies	Less dropouts	Monitoring at school level

⁶ Please include all initiatives listed in the tables above.

8) Transition class (<i>Übergangsstufe</i>)	Students at the age of 15	Number varies	Successful transition	Educational statistics
9) Competence oriented, self-dependant learning (<i>Kompetenzorientiertes, eigenverantwortliches Lernen – KOEL</i>)	Students in vocational tracks	Students in certain vocational schools, number varies	Better outcomes related to competences and transition	
10) youth coaching (<i>Jugendcoaching</i>)	Young people in their last years and compulsory schools, NEETs up to the age of 18	estimated participants 2013: 35,000	Orientation towards choosing a further education or formation	Follow-up, evaluation study
11) Apprenticeship coaching (<i>Coaching für Lehrlinge und Lehrbetriebe</i>)	5,000 - 10,000	Estimated participants 2013: approx. 500	Support for completing the vocational training	Statistics of apprenticeships; DWH for apprenticeship training-subsidies
12) Free of Charge preparatory courses for the final apprenticeship examination (<i>unentgeltliche Vorbereitungskurse auf die Lehrabschlussprüfung</i>)	All apprentices	All apprentices	Successful completion of apprenticeship	
13) Education-related employment career monitoring (<i>Bildungsbezogenes Erwerbskarrierenmonitoring</i>)	Monitoring of all young people leaving school			
14) Free catch up education (<i>Nachholen Bildungsabschluss</i>)	Around 4 % of young people, 5,000 per year	3,000 participants in 2013	Completion of compulsory schooling	Statistics from the Initiative Adult education
15) Fit for Education and Training (<i>AusbildungsFit</i>)	Young people lacking basic qualifications	2014: Approx. 730 participants	Giving young people a second chance to acquire previously missed basic qualifications and social skills	Number of participants, follow up, Source: AMS DWH
16) Integrated vocational training (<i>Integrative Berufsausbildung</i>)	5,000 - 7,000	2012: 5,740 participants	Completion, Integration in the labour market	Statistics of apprenticeships; AMS DWH

17) Future for the Youth (<i>Aktion Zukunft Jugend</i>)	Unemployed young people 19-24, stock 3 quarters 2013: 33,608	2012: 81,000 training or up-skilling, 96,000 enter employment brokered by the employment service	Integration in the labour market	Number of participants, follow up, Source: AMS DWH
18) Training Guarantee (<i>Ausbildungsgarantie</i>)	Young people up to the age of 18 that want to start an apprenticeship	2011/12: 9,400	Completion, Integration in the labour market	Statistics of apprenticeships; AMS DWH Evaluation study
19) Production Schools (<i>Produktionsschulen</i>)	Mainly targeted to young people between 15 and 19, but also open for young people up to the age of 25 with difficulties in finding a job	2012: 2,600	Integration in the labour market or education system	Number of participants, follow up, Source: AMS DWH Evaluation study
20) Adult Education Initiative	People aged 16 and older who have not completed lower secondary school			
21) Business start-up programme and business start-up subsidy (<i>Unternehmensgründungsprogramm und Gründungsbeihilfe</i>)	Unemployed individuals (irrespective of their entitlement to UI benefits) – as well as job-seekers who are still employed but will lose their job in the foreseeable future – who intend to enter self-employment, have a concrete business idea and appropriate qualifications	2012: EUR 11.1m (subsidy), EUR 4.8m (business start-up programme); approx. 5% of the participants are less than 25 years old	Self-employment	Number of participants, follow up, Source: AMS DWH
22) WIK:I – What I Know (and what I didn't learn in school)	All young people in Austria	Estimated participants 2014: 500	Visibility of skills acquired in informal settings and thus a better position in job interviews	Follow up, evaluation

Appendix 1

Early School Leaving Strategy:

http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/24401/schulabbruch_eslstrategie.pdf

LLL:2020 Strategy:

http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/20916/lll-arbeitspapier_ebook_gross.pdf