

## Managing the transition from school to work

Managing the transition from school to work involves compiling offers in the transitory process from college to work and providing young people with the possibility of both vocational training and employment. The aims are as follows:

- To strengthen the social participation of young people.
- To improve equal opportunities for groups of young people who find themselves at a disadvantage in the education/training system.
- To develop employment opportunities and to help integrate young people in work and training.
- To satisfy the demand for qualified personnel in the Landkreis of Osnabrück.

A wide range of possibilities can be found in the social, educational and work-related assistance provided for the management of the school-to-work transition. As well as improving their personal skills, abilities and competencies, these young adults receive support in their development as individuals. Types of assistance provided include counselling and monitoring to help students attain educational and professional qualifications, to cover vacant vocational training positions, and also to support companies in the process of recruiting personnel and during in-company training as part of the dual education system.

[1]

### Target:

For each individual with problems of absenteeism from school to receive an offer to prevent their absenteeism and to help them to obtain a qualification, and especially when they receive an SGB II allowance.

### Action strategies:

1. To implement and/or increase counselling against school absenteeism and to promote access to the on-line portal for combatting absenteeism in all the schools in the Landkreis of Osnabrück.
2. To implement preventive actions against absenteeism in all schools.
3. To offer advice to, and accompany, young people with problems of absenteeism who are 14 years of age and older and to also offer support to their parents.
4. To finance, fill and monitor the places available on projects aimed at ensuring that students meet their schooling obligations outside normal school hours by participating in workshops aimed at young people.
5. To collect data on absenteeism during compulsory schooling by working in collaboration with all of the schools, the 10 information centres, and the juvenile court.



[2]

## Target:

For all young people, and especially those of school age who receive an SGB II allowance, and for both present and past alumni of special needs, primary, secondary and vocational training centres to receive an offer of training with the objective of achieving their initial professional incorporation within the labour market and the corresponding follow up and support.

## Action strategies:

1. To counsel, accompany and offer assistance to young adults during the school-to-work transition.
2. To develop and implement the obligatory transmission structures during all the stages of the transition period.
3. To fill vocational training vacancies.
4. To offer support to apprentices during their training and to the companies which contract young adults for work training.
5. To create a network of cooperation involving the different bodies that participate in the process of transition from school to work.
6. To organise events to help present fruitful projects to aid young people in the transition between training and the world of work.

[3]

## Target:

For the construction and development of sound cooperative structures between the different types of school and companies with a view to helping companies to set up a systematic recruitment plan.

## Action strategies:

1. To promote and establish regional links of collaboration between companies and schools.
2. To establish close ties between companies and schools.
3. To consolidate cooperation between school programmes and business strategies.
4. To develop cooperation modules in schools.
5. To develop world-of-work-oriented educational concepts.
6. To train teachers in the business environment.
7. To fill vocational training vacancies.



Management of the transition closes **the interface between legal constructs such as SGB II, SGB III, SGB VIII, SGB XII, the educational coordination of the Landkreis of Osnabrück and both general education and vocational training schools. Management of the transition therefore contributes** towards improved cooperation and coordination between the participating bodies. Management of the transition currently begins with the collaboration of municipal and voluntary participants and continues with social and professional integration before a qualification is obtained.

Within the networking framework, management of the transition involves close cooperation with companies, schools, parents, employment agencies, youth workshops and educational institutions.

## School-Economy action area

Cooperation between schools and companies increases the possibility of obtaining work experience or vocational training positions. By jointly accepting responsibility for supporting young adults during their basic education and vocational training, schools and companies strengthen their local economic bases and minimize the migration of qualified workers to other regions.

The **School-Economy Service Centre** supports the organisation and coordination of a comprehensive system of cooperation between secondary schools and companies with the aim of improving vocational counselling, planning the transition between the school and work environments, and filling vocational training vacancies.

### What we need:

- An exchange of ideas between schools and companies via regular network meetings.
- The organisation of 'information fairs' about employment possibilities and vocational guidance events.
- To provide counselling to companies and students with respect to possible forms of cooperation.
- Appropriate vocational training centres whose courses match the profiles of participating companies.
- To initiate and monitor cooperation with a view to improving careers advice and providing future apprentices with help to choose their work and training.
- Participation in current cooperation agreements and also in their development and evaluation.
- To support companies in their search for apprentices.
- To promote BINKOS as a work experience mediation platform.

### Benefits for companies:

- Companies get the opportunity to meet future work experience students in advance, with the consequent possibility of establishing direct relationships with them.



- Through work experience-oriented projects at schools and involving students, the company can influence the quality of the training.
- A quarter of adolescents either drop out of the education system or fail their high school graduation exams, while a third of university students do not finish their studies. In contrast, work experience-oriented vocational training reduces the school drop-out rate, with more apprentices continuing in company work experience programmes and for longer.
- Companies can rely on better qualified young adults for a given trade or profession.
- Early contact with students reduces the medium-term recruitment effort required of companies and gives them a competitive advantage over their competitors.
- The social commitment implicit in supporting the development of the education and professional career orientation of young adults enhances the prestige of the company in terms of its corporate social responsibility and also helps to consolidate the commercial status of the company.
- The company is seen as an attractive employer for skilled labour which is more interested in working for it.
- Business owners have the opportunity to acquire some knowledge and understanding of the tasks, methods and possibilities of the participating schools, and in this way they can also take part in the life of the school.

## Benefits for the schools:

- Through practical work experience-oriented projects and company monitoring, the opportunities for vocational training are widened.
- The questions, tasks and realistic work assignments related to the world of work of the participating companies lend a more serious character to the training process and improve students' understanding of the realities of work.
- Teachers have the opportunity to exchange ideas with company representatives and are better able to keep up to date on economic, technical and personnel-related questions.
- In real life-oriented projects, work experience students learn new action strategies.
- The secondary school finds a consolidated long-term partner for cooperation in its programme to help meet real life work-related targets.
- The image of the school is enhanced as an institution with social responsibility and which is looking to the future.

## Vocational training counsellors

Vocational guidance counsellors, or careers advisors, provide support to young adults, between the ages of 15 and 26, who are either looking for, or in the process of undergoing, vocational training. The ultimate goal is for these students **to obtain a school certificate, a successful transition to vocational training and employment, and a professional qualification.**



## The counsellors offer advice to young adults

- Who are unclear about their future professional career perspectives.
- Who have academic problems.
- Who wish to resolve the problems that are impeding their entry into the labour market.
- Who are having problems during their vocational training.

## The counsellors offer support to companies

- In personnel recruitment.
- In the event of problems with an apprentice.
- In improving the quality of the training provided.

## The counsellors

- Clarify professional goals.
- Help young adults to prepare their job applications.
- Practise recruitment tests and job interview techniques with the students.
- Look for vocational training positions and offers of work experience, schools and qualifications.
- Find job positions in the primary labour market.
- Remain in contact with students, even after they have found a vocational training position and/or job position.

Depending on each individual case, counsellors are able to take advantage of the existing aid network in order to offer the back-up help of the various participating institutions. The counsellors contact young adults through the school's social service section, its teachers, the offices of specialist careers advice and/or other institutions. Young adults can also make direct contact with the counsellors. This is a free service.

## Pro-Aktiv-Center

The purpose of the Pro-Aktiv-Center programme, which is funded by the autonomous region of Lower Saxony and the European Social Fund, is to promote the social and professional integration of disadvantaged young people. This is based on § 13 SGB VIII (legal obligations for Law governing social support for young people). The Pro-Aktiv-Center is financed to support the activities of the counsellors.

- Information about vocational training counsellors [6]



## Action area: absenteeism from school

Since 1999, the region of Osnabrück has been actively involved in preventing absenteeism from school, providing both internal and extracurricular support for young adults who drop out of school and leave their family home. The goal is to provide these students with offers that prevent absenteeism from school and which encourage them to stay at school and obtain academic qualifications.

### Department for Coordination against Absenteeism from School

The responsibilities of this department include the creation of networks of entities that will actively participate in preventing absenteeism and also monitor and follow-up on any action taken. Particular importance is given to the subsequent incorporation of guidelines to prevent absenteeism and to gathering the corresponding data and statistics.

### Specialist counselling against absenteeism from school

Specialist counselling is offered to young people from the age of 14, as well as to their parents and schools. From the very start, individual counselling and help is provided with the goal of reintegrating the student into the school environment and/or helping them avoid dropping out of the education system. The guidance centre coordinates any assistance required relating to each individual case and supervises the planning process for training.

The department has an annual caseload of around 150 young people. The majority of them receive an offer from outside their initial institution to complete their compulsory schooling. Some remain at their original school, but receive intensive support provided by the specialist counselling service in order to encourage them to attend school regularly.

*Landkreis Osnabrück*