



Partnership Strategies for Youth Employment

Study Visit for Local Development Practitioners

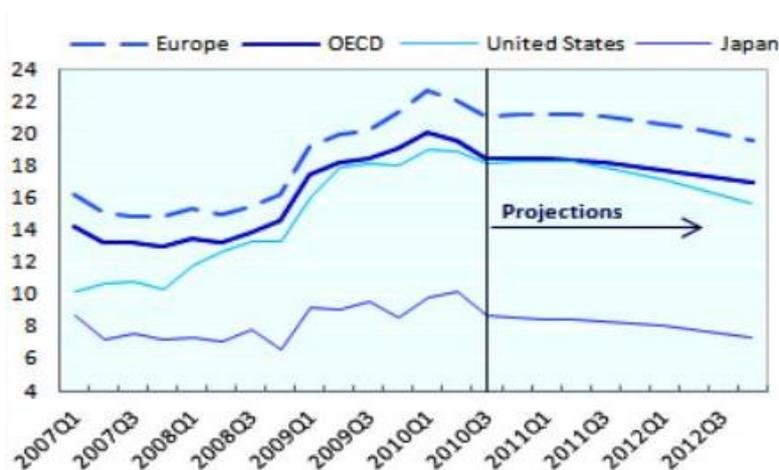
24 – 26 April 2012, Upper Austria

Agenda

The issue

In most OECD countries, youth unemployment rates have been a source of concern for many years. In spite of manifold strategies to improve education and vocational training and to create additional jobs for young people (also in self-employment), the situation has worsened during the recession and youth find it increasingly difficult to enter the labour market. The outlook remains gloomy: the most recent OECD projections expect youth unemployment rates to be around 17% in 2012 (OECD, www.oecd.org/employment/youth). The number of youth disconnected from education and the labour market is increasing as is the number of those who cannot find permanent employment after temporary contracts. In some countries this has spread to higher qualified youth. OECD research has identified three major youth groups which can be distinguished by having different characteristics and needs: so-called “good performers” who tend to perform well in times of economic growth but cannot find adequate employment (in their region); poorly integrated new entrants who cannot find stable employment, often in spite of having good qualifications; and those who are neither in employment nor in education or training, known as NEET (for more details see [here](#)).

Figure 1. Youth Unemployment 2011-2012



Source: OECD (2010), *Off to a Good Start? Jobs for Youth* and OECD (2010), *Economic Outlook*, No. 88.

Local partnerships for youth employment

Within its current programme of work, the OECD LEED (Local Economic and Employment Development) Programme is undertaking research on the factors leading to youth exclusion from the labour market at the local level, and reviewing programmes and locally differentiated national measures put in place to support youth in the school-to-work transition, labour market integration, job retention and progression. Within this context it will identify and assess multi-dimensional area-based strategies to facilitate youth employment. The project will build on earlier LEED work on youth entrepreneurship, asset building, skills upgrading, local skills strategies and the social economy.

While many issues are to be addressed at national level, much needs to and can be done at local level. Success requires place-specific, cross-sector responses involving different local players as part of wider local development strategies. At the same time, it is important for

industry groups, colleges and employment agencies to work together to ensure that young people have accurate careers guidance as to opportunities in the local economy, and career ladders to support employment progression and better skills utilisation.

Study focus: Upper Austria, Austria

The OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance is supporting the overall work of the OECD by conducting a study visit to the Province of Upper Austria, Austria. With a comparatively low youth unemployment rate of only 4.1% (compared to a national average of 6.2% - data for <25, 06/2011), and long-term successful collaboration by public institutions, social partners and NGOs, measures can be concentrated on those most in need. The initiatives that were developed within the framework of the provincial Territorial Employment Pact stand as excellent examples of how to deal with socially excluded or otherwise hard to place young people in particular, and show good practice as how to implement long-term upskilling measures.

The Partnership for Labour and Qualification Upper Austria, as the provincial Employment Pact is known, comprises the provincial government, the provincial AMS (employment offices), social partners, and the Provincial Education Board as partners. The direct involvement of the Education Board, responsible for education issues at the provincial level, is a clear signal of its high priority. The partnership's programme is decided on an annual basis and delivered regionally; there are five sub-provincial regions. The collaboration agreement constitutes the reference point for active labour market policy, and mutual understanding between the partners allows for a quick response to any labour market developments. With an overall budget of 166m EUR, the partnership reaches about 70 000 people.

The strategic goals cover, amongst other issues, ensuring youth and young adults gain the qualifications required to become skilled personnel, a reduction of the proportion of low qualified workers, the integration of marginalised groups, the widening of opportunities for people with migrant backgrounds, and self-employment. Increasing young adults' qualification levels was introduced as a priority in 2009, with the aim of ensuring improved prospects in the labour market by setting the target of at least 90% of all young adults in Upper Austria obtaining a qualification beyond compulsory school level by 2015.

Measures to achieve these strategic goals include short-term expert up-skilling, semi-skilling (to open up chances to a higher qualification level without a full qualification programme), job placement training and demand-oriented qualifications (targeted qualifications for specific jobs/employment sectors) and schools of production. A new project designed especially for young people is the youth labour foundation JUST, based on the successful Austrian experience of labour foundations and shaped to take account of the needs of some 150 participants.

The study visit

Issues that will be covered during the study visit:

- The structure and political targets of the Territorial Employment Pact;
- Measures for a better transition from school to work;
- The School of Production;
- Measures for young people with special needs;
- Youth labour foundation - JUST.

The programme will be organised around project visits and meetings with representatives from the province, the AMS, social partners, project promoters and participants. The study visit will also provide opportunities to learn more about the general framework conditions in Austria supporting youth employment i.e. the apprenticeship system and the qualification guarantee from the federal government.

Programme

Tuesday 24th April

Dedicated to examining the structures of the Territorial Employment Pact Upper Austria – Partnership for Labour and Qualification, main policies for the integration of youth into the labour market in Austria, and examples of projects realised within the partnership.

- 12:00** Welcome lunch, hosted by OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance
- 13:30** Introduction by the OECD LEED Programme and the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance activities by Michael Förschner, ZSI
- 13:45** Local Strategies for Youth Employment
Presentation by OECD LEED
- 14:15** Partnership for Labour and Qualification, Upper Austria
Speaker TBC

Contributions from partners to the discussion
- 15:00** Youth integration policies in Austria: an overview (education, the dual system, school drop outs etc.)
Presentation by Michael Förschner, ZSI
- 15:20** Coffee break
- 15:35** Masterplan for Youth, information measures initiated in collaboration by AMS (Employment Office), provincial government, and social partners
Presentation by Birgit Gerstorfer, Director of AMS Upper Austria and other TEP members
- 18.00** End of day 1
- 19:00** Dinner with representatives from the region, hosted by OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance

Wednesday 25th April

Project initiatives for the integration of youth will be visited. Presentations and discussions with project promoters and participants will allow their main challenges, approaches and achievements to be analysed.

- 8:30** Professional qualification for young women at VFQ (*Gesellschaft für Frauen und Qualifizierung*)
Project visit to a recently awarded qualification project for women to become carpenters and glaziers
- 10:00** Informative meeting for youth in compulsory education at the Centre for Professional Information (BIZ) of AMS Linz
Participation in the event organised by IAB *Institut für Ausbildungs und Beschäftigungsberatung*
- 12:00** Lunch at Laguna, a socio-economic enterprise funded by AMS
- 13:30** Transfer to Steyr
- 15:00** Project 'Deine Chance', organised by BFI in co-operation with schools, the adult education centre, and social partners to support the integration of disadvantaged youth (specifically with migration backgrounds); covers the interface between school and work, trying to reduce the rate of drop outs
Presentation by Marlies Auer, BFI and Harald Hodanek, Director of Taborschule Steyr
- 16:30** Site visit to Museum Arbeitswelt, a special museum dedicated to life in the old industrial city of Steyr
- 18.00** End of day 2
- 19:00** Night-watchman tour through the city of Steyr
- 20:00** Dinner

Overnight stay in Steyr

Thursday 26th April

- 9:00** Corporate qualification measures: interplant qualification by BFI in collaboration with the apprenticeship workshop of MAN company for youth without an apprenticeship agreement in metal and electronic industries
Presentation by Hubert Heindl, AMS Steyr, and others
- 11:00** School of Production – a special measure for the integration of youth with problems entering the labour market, including people with a migrant background
- 12:30** Lunch at the School of Production, where Gastronomy is one of the subject matters

13:30 Discussion on main findings and conclusions

14:30 Return to Linz

15:30 End of study visit

Who can participate?

Policy makers and practitioners directly involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of regional/local youth employment strategies. Participants should also be able to act as peers in the framework of the study tour, and to provide feedback on the policies and projects presented.

Cost of Participation

No participation fees are required. Participants will cover their own travel and accommodation.

Working language

English

Contact and Information

For more information on the study visit, please contact Mr. Michael Förschner at ZSI – Centre for Social Innovation, Vienna, foerschner@zsi.at or Anna Rosa Vollmann, vollmann@zsi.at.