

Summary

In this two year Comenius Regio Partnership we have learnt a lot about different approaches how to connect education and the labour market. Therefore we designed the project CHAIN: Cooperation Holland and Austria Improving Networking. We have tried to improve networking with the aim to prevent early school-leaving and to reduce the unemployment rate among young people.

To achieve this goal, both regions have good examples of projects and programmes. Next to holistic strategies by local and regional government, promising developments within schools for secondary education and schools for vocational education and training have been made in the field of career orientation and career guidance. In our point of view, the secret for success is a mixture of different activities on different levels with different stakeholders. We have recognized the added value of this European project for all partners by seeing all sorts of projects and programmes, methods and good practice from government, schools, companies and other supportive institutions like STVG.

We have experienced how to increase the involvement of companies in education and cooperation with schools. In both countries we identified demand orientated approaches, schools which focus on preparing young people for a changing labour market. Labour market information has been used within schools, representatives from companies offered lessons within schools. There have been close links between companies (HRM department) and schools.

We have identified interesting methods to support young people at risk - no one should be left behind. Companies and employers' organisations are in the lead and are responsible to develop all talents within the regions of Graz and 's-Hertogenbosch.

In the described good practices you can take notice of these good methods in this publication.

By seeing all this examples we have found out that there are different possibilities to increase the involvement of companies in education and cooperation with schools, but the major part to be successful is to have personal networks, and persons/teachers/staff members who are willing to work with partners from outside of their field. Not only in Austria, also in the Netherlands, teachers and stakeholders told us, that working together means to make compromises and to have a personal link to the partner institution. More specifically, it is the „little bit extra“ that you need to give in order to obtain a network. It is not a 9-5 job. And afterwards you have to find a joint solution of the way how you work together and find a WIN-WIN situation for all.

Finally, this project was very successful because in the meetings, discussions, working together we experienced: passion, vision and action: The only way to succeed.

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