



“PASSION, VISION AND ACTION IN COOPERATION:
THE ONLY WAY TO SUCCEED!”

“EXPERIENCES, PRACTICES AND FINDINGS OF THE EUROPEAN PROJECT
CHAIN ABOUT COOPERATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS, ENTERPRISES, THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION
AND THE LABOUR MARKET.”



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CHAIN – Cooperation Holland and Austria Improvement Networking

Background

The published indicators of the European benchmarks claim that the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 10% in 2020. Although the project partners show early school leaving rates below the European 27 average rate the development in the countries has slowed down for various reasons. The figures of the partner countries Austria and the Netherlands show, that there is still a need to improve in the above mentioned benchmark area.

Vocational education training has an important role in the fight for reducing the share of young people who tend to become early school leavers. It provides not only information on the job market and job descriptions but it enables and supports the contact to the world of work. Through different kind of measures – varying in the two partner countries – between school and enterprises, supported by different network partners and stakeholders, young people’s employability is strengthened. Direct contacts to the world of work and “first hand experiences” support their integration into the labour market. Initial vocational education and training is a preventive and successful tool helping to reduce early school leaving

Aims of CHAIN

Both partner countries want to support and strengthen the cooperation between schools and companies and thus – in an indirect way – contribute to the reduction and prevention of early school leaving by different activities. The municipality of ‘s-Hertogenbosch has a great expertise in this working field through different projects and is strongly involved in the cooperation between education, municipality and entrepreneurs. Graz has also great expertise and experiences in vocational education and training and measures connecting schools and the world of work.

Topics of the project

1. How to increase the involvement of companies for education/cooperation with schools?
2. Lifelong learning (is there any policy on this in the involved companies in this Comenius project)?
3. Leading role local government; to stimulate that companies start their company, that companies stay in Graz / ‘s-Hertogenbosch (good entrepreneurs-climate), to stimulate a better connection between unemployed people and actual and future jobs?
4. Demand orientated approach by local government, labour office, schools. Basis is the demand of the labour market; schools, labour office, local government take this as a start for their work/approach?
5. Tailor-made arrangements (develop innovative instruments, flexible structures)?
6. Career orientation and career guidance (again demand of the labour market starting point for activities by schools/STVG etcetera)?
7. Labour market information; only by good knowledge of the local/regional labour market you can prepare young people to the right jobs/companies?
8. HRM-policy; important to know what HRM-policy is made by the involved companies. Schools and local government can focus on a better way to realise a well-functioning labour market!

The common goal is:

- To exchange experiences and good-practices.
- To identify the success criteria considering that there are quite different situations in the partner countries.
- To learn from each other about useful measures connecting school and world of work.
- To learn about different strategies of municipalities in order to cooperate with companies.

's-Hertogenbosch and Graz want to improve the connection between companies, schools, local government and other stakeholders in the field of education and the labour market. Both regions want to exchange ideas and good practices.

About this Publication

This publication presents the partners relevant for the project, the projects milestones and the good practices which have been presented in the project. Some conclusions are to be found in the last chapter.

Comenius Regio Partnership Partner Organisations

Gemeente 's-Hertogenbosh

The municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch is the capital of the province of Noord-Brabant, the largest province in the Netherlands. The city has approximately 140.000 inhabitants and offers a wide range of education. One of the main goals of Youth and Education is to reduce the number of young people leaving the school without qualifications. The municipality takes the lead to realise a well-functioning labour market. For that the cooperation within the municipality between Economic affairs, Social affairs, Labour affairs and Youth and Education becomes more and more strong. Even more important is the growing cooperation between the different stakeholders in the field of education and labour market: schools, companies, employers' organisations, labour office, chamber of commerce, knowledge centres.

Koning Willem 1 College

Koning Willem I College is a Dutch Community College. It provides a wide variety of occupational programmes and courses, ranging from all sorts of technical, IT- and business courses to courses in economics, health care, sports and welfare, architecture, design, fashion, theatre and multimedia. These courses are available at different levels: from assistant to specialist levels and from trainee to entrepreneur. The transfer of knowledge and acquisition of skills, by making use of the latest technologies, learning strategies and the input of companies, plays an important role in education at King William I College. Students are trained to be responsible and self-regulating people, in a society which is becoming more and more complex.

Hervioncollege

Hervion College is a school for secondary, pre-vocational education. The students are 12 to 16/17 years old. The study lasts four years in total, starting with two years of basic secondary education. The sector of the school is economics. Students can choose four study-paths: theoretical general education connecting to the highest level of the vocational education, combined study-path with partly general, partly vocational, management study-path or basic-vocational study-path. The school has two locations. Hervion College, the first location, has about 560 students. They have the possibility to study administration/trade, tourism and restaurant business. The second location has about 440 students and is mostly for students with special needs. They study a broad pre-vocational programme with special attention for trade and multimedia.

Brabant-Zeeuwse Werkgeversvereniging - BZW

The BZW is the regional organisation of the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers, known as VNO-NCW, which is the largest employers' organisation in the Netherlands. They are covering almost all sectors of the economy, including more than 80% of all medium-sized companies in the Netherlands and nearly all of the larger, corporate institutions. They represent the interests of Dutch business and industry and provide a range of services to their members. They are promoting a high quality business environment and investment climate, with a view to boosting the competitiveness of Dutch industry. Their involvement extends to matters relating to education, labour market, innovation, infrastructure, the environment and social security. They represent members via ongoing contacts with the national, regional and local governments, politicians, schools, trade unions and non-governmental bodies. They sit on numerous government advisory boards and consultative committees.

Stadt Graz – Abteilung für Bildung und Integration

The Department for Education and Integration is the legal entity of the public elementary, secondary modern and special schools in the city of Graz. It is responsible for all non pedagogic affairs of these school types. It has special interest in improving the connection between school and enterprises for giving better job-chances to young people.

NMS/BG/BRG Klusemannstraße

The BG/BRG/NMS Klusemannstraße is a school located in the western part of the City of Graz. Besides giving pupils a classical general education and conveying cultural techniques and key qualifications, it is a matter of great importance to them to give pupils the space to experience themselves as active, critical members of a democratic community. It is their daily task to accompany children from all levels of society with different cultural backgrounds in the process of growing up and growing into the community of adults as well as to provide them with creativity, sophistication, respect for others and the courage to make use of their freedom.

NMS Graz Webling

The school NMS Graz Webling is a school on the secondary level in Graz. Because of the long-time leadership as a secondary school, which has intensively dealt with the combination of teaching the subject orientation and integration into working life, they have very strong interest in collaborating with the industry. This is demonstrated by the willingness of various companies and institutions dealing with youth employment to come every year - in collaboration with career guidance teachers - at the school and introduce them and tell the students about important issues of their field of business.

Bezirksschulrat Stadt Graz

The Bezirksschulrat is in charge of the lower secondary schools in Graz and is the school inspection authority of the city. The tasks of the Bezirksschulrat are mainly the controlling and monitoring of schools. They also support the schools in their efforts in realizing different projects and measures. Especially the cooperation school – company and the therefore necessary network is supported by the Bezirksschulrat. There is an already existing network consisting of institutions and companies, e.g. Billa, Magna Steyr, Chamber of commerce, Public labour market service.

Industriellenvereinigung

The Federation of Austrian Industries Styria is a voluntary lobbying organisation for the industry with the focus on the manufacturing sector and the industrial environment. It provides a network and comprises 380 members. The Federation of Austrian Industries acts as a cooperation platform for Styria's industry and therefore represents 80% of Styria's industrial workforce. It is committed to active participation in society and therefore is interested in well-educated students applying for apprenticeship jobs. The Federation of Austrian Industries is interested in taking lead in industrial policy discussions on a national level and, if interests of Austrian enterprises are at stake, also on an international level.

Steirische Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft

The Styrian Association for Education and Economics ‚Steirische Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft‘, located in Graz, Styria's capital, in Austria, generally aims at a strengthening of Styria's and Austria's educational position within Europe, as well as supporting economic, social and societal developments of the future. Education and economy is the main topic of the ‚STVG‘ pursued by offering seminars for students, trainees and university students. The Syrian Association for Education and Economics is also involved in regional, national and European projects at the interfaces and contact points of education and economy.

Project milestones

1st project meeting in Graz: 3.3.2013 – 6.3.2013

11 representatives of secondary schools, schools for Vocational Educational training, companies and local government from 's-Hertogenbosch (NL) visited Graz (AT). Main aim of the CHAIN-exchange is to get a clear picture of how schools, companies and local government work closely together to prepare young people for labour market-perspective. So in the two days exchange these three stakeholders (schools, companies, local government) show their joint effort.

In this visit we especially worked on the following themes/topics:

- How to increase the involvement of companies for education/cooperation with schools
- Life long learning (is there any policy on this in the involved companies in this Comenius project)
- Demand orientated approach by local government, labour office, schools. Basis is the demand of the labourmarket; schools, labour office, local government take this as a start for their work/approach
- Career orientation and care guidance (again demand of the labourmarket starting point for activities by schools/STVG etcetera)
- Labour market information; only by good knowledge of the local/regional labourmarket you can prepare young people to the right jobs/companies
- HRM-policy; important to know what HRM-policy is made by the involved companies. Schools and local government can focus on a better way to realise a well functioning labourmarket!

Local government

At the townhall of Graz Herbert Just, head of Stadtschulamt Graz, gave information about Graz "City of schools". Andreas Morianz explained the economic situation. It was clear that Graz is booming, a lot of industry, a lot of chances for young people in the transition from school to work. Very impressive, also the active role of the city of Graz to connect schools and companies.

Schools

The presentation of NMS Webling and NMS Klusemannstraße showed us how the networks between schools, companies and the city of Graz are functioning. You could see, feel and smell the close cooperation between the different actors in the field of education and labourmarket.

Companies

The visit to Andritz AG was great. Bernhard Pesenhofer, Head of Assembly/Packing/Apprentices gave a presentation about the company and apprenticeships. The plant tour was impressive. Gernot Pagger from Federation of Austrian Industries explained the role of companies/ associations of companies to connect the worlds of school and work. It is clear that companies are pro-active in the connection with education.



The region of Graz has a lot of multinationals and the companies have a big demand for new employees. Therefore companies inform (young) students in schools about future job opportunities. Career orientation and career guidance within schools is a lot influenced by the companies in and around Graz. The delegation of 's-Hertogenbosch noted this situation as a success factor in preparing young people for the labour market. Is this why Austria has such a low rate of youth unemployment?

Light bulb moments

Edward de Gier, Bossche Vakschool: „The cooperation between schools and companies, in special the way it is organised at Andritz AG and the way they have incorporated the „Steirische Volkswirtschaftliche Gesellschaft“. In the Netherlands there should be a more intensive relationship between education and companies, in the region of 's-Hertogenbosch on the level of employers organisation BZW and headmasters/directors vocational education“.

Eric van Woesik, Koning Willem 1 College: “It was interesting how NMS Graz Webling and NMS/BG/BRG Klusemannstrasse bridge the gap between the Grammar School and the Secondary Modern School and in particular how they pay attention to the different talents and social-background of students.

Eugène Princée, employers organisation BZW: „The joint project of the Industriellenvereinigung Steiermark with a group of companies to promote jobs in the industry“.

Veronique Scharenborg, 5* Noordoost Brabant Werkt!: “How learning within Andritz is integrated in the company, the humanistic approach in schools and the strength of teacher commitment“.

Theo van de Veerdonk, municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch: “In Graz 60 organisations (schools and companies) meet each other, talking about new jobs. Children are stimulated to create new projects (entrepreneurial spirit). Project „Your job“ initiated and paid by 7 big companies in Graz. Good example how you connect schools and the world of work. Teachers commitment! 100% connection between Andritz and Education!“.



2nd projectmeeting in 's-Hertogenbosch: 3.11.2013 – 6.11.2013

10 representatives of secondary schools, associations of companies and local government from Graz visited 's-Hertogenbosch. Aim of the visit was to have a closer look on the cooperation between the stakeholders in the field of education and labour market in the Region of 's-Hertogenbosch.

During this visit we especially worked on the following themes/topics:

- Lifelong learning (is there any policy on this in the involved companies in this Comenius project)
- Leading role local government; to stimulate that companies start their company, that companies stay in Graz/'s-Hertogenbosch (good entrepreneurs-climate), to stimulate a better connection between unemployed people and actual and future jobs?
- Demand orientated approach by local government, labour office, schools. Basis is the demand of the labour market; schools, labour office, local government take this as a start for their work/approach
- HRM-policy; important to know what HRM-policy is made by the involved companies. Schools and local government can focus on a better way to realise a well-functioning labour market!

Local government

Alderman Huib van Olden of the city of 's-Hertogenbosch, responsible for labour market, gave a warm welcome and presented the goal for the two days meeting in 's-Hertogenbosch. He talked about the needed passion, vision and action to get joint successes. Veronique Scharenborg and Karin van Meer, programme managers education and labour market from the region North East Brabant ('s-Hertogenbosch belongs to this region) explained the specific situation of this broader region.

Schools

One visit was at the vocational educational training centre Koning Willem 1 College. The group got a presentation from Eric van Woesik and Jacques Doomernik about „The school for the future“ and after that a presentation of „The BONO Expertise Centre KW1C“ by Harry v.d. Schans. The second school visit was to Baanderherencollege (BHC) in Boxtel, it is a secondary school for prevocational education. Jan-Willem v.d. Berg explained the way how young people are supported in career orientation and career guidance during their school career at BHC.

Companies

Visit to Vanderlande Industries B.V. in the city of Veghel. Linneke Stoltenborgh, team leader Recruitment Vanderlande Industries B.V. gave a general presentation about the company. After that there was a plant tour and presentation of the innovation centre. Finally the Dutch and Austrian participants and representatives of the HRM department of Vanderlande Industries B.V. had a dialogue about developments on the labour market and the link to schools/Vanderlande Academy; what could be improved, what are the needs from companies. Focus on education was presented by Lyset den Blijker, Vanderlande Academy



Light bulb moments

“To achieve a common goal, such as to be the world leader in the AGRI-food field, a reasonable time frame and especially key people needed to support the developments. If key people are inspired and believe in the work they are doing, they can do everything! But it is hard work and more than a job from 9 – 5 o’clock”.

“Schools can do more than just teaching. Schools should be aware that they have to support the development of their students’ key competences, as well. A very good example for that was “The Bono Centre”. Creativity and imagination can support the development of each person in a school.”

“Tailor-made courses for regional companies, which are offered in schools, can support the transition from the school to the world of work. Those kind of programmes foster Win-Win situation for all youngsters, companies and also the labour market situation in general.”

“Individual plans for each student at the workshop classes at Baanderherencollege are a very good approach to let pupils find their way in the time they need. It seems that it is not always necessary to fulfil one task after the other, like teachers sometimes use to plan for their students. Pupils should make their own plans and learn at their own pace.”

“The Vanderlande Academy and the Human Resource Strategy for different target groups were very impressive. The common goal to raise interests for jobs at Vanderlande Industries B.V among young people is evident everywhere, for example the programmes for bachelor students, programme for schools, Girl’s Day – a joint human resource strategy, where they put in a lot effort and resources to get best people they can.”



3rd projectmeeting in Graz: 9.3.2014 – 12.3.2014

13 representatives from 's-Hertogenbosch visited Graz. It was the 3rd meeting in the CHAIN-project with representatives from schools, companies and local government. In this exchange there was an extra focus on linking pin to the labour market.

In this visit we especially worked on the following themes/topics:

- How to increase the involvement of companies for education/cooperation with schools
- Lifelong learning (is there any policy on this in the involved companies in this Comenius project)
- Leading role local government; to stimulate that companies start their company, that companies stay in Graz (good entrepreneurs-climate), to stimulate a better connection between unemployed people and actual and future jobs
- Demand orientated approach by local government, labour office, schools. Basis is the demand of the labour market; schools, labour office, local government take this as a start for their work/approach
- Career orientation and career guidance (again demand of the labour market starting point for activities by schools/STVG)
- Labour market information; only by good knowledge of the local/regional labour market you can prepare young people to the right jobs/companies
- HRM-policy; important to know what HRM-policy is made by the involved companies. Schools and local government can focus on a better way to realise a well-functioning labour market!

Local government

The role of the city of Graz was presented by Elisabeth Potzinger. The policy of the City of Graz is a joint strategy for Development. Information about this has been written down in a publication which is called: "Bildung findet Stadt". Andreas Morianz, City of Graz, gave more insight in the economic strategy of Graz and region.

Schools

Visits to NMS/BG/BRG Klusemannstraße and NMS Webling. Topic: Methods and Efforts for Career Guidance for a demanding labour market. The schools informed us about "Stärkenportfolio", "Straße der Fähigkeiten", "BO-Woche", "Berufspraktische Tage", "BO-Oberstufe" and project „Jugendcoaching“.

Radio Igel within the school of NMS Webling was a great concept how you can use multimedia to raise the talents of young people. This all fits in methods and efforts for Career Guidance for a demanding labour market.



Companies

Working visit to the company of Magna Steyr. Gerald Bertl presented the project „Your Job“. Magna Steyr offered us a plant tour; it was very impressive to get a closer look to the production process within this company.

Additionally there was a roundtable discussion with representatives of different companies to exchange experiences with apprentices:

- Herr Muhr and apprentices, Company Anton Paar
- Herr Fasching and apprentices, Company Siemens
- Frau Jurina and apprentices, Company Kastner und Öhler
- Melanie Koell, Almuni NMS Webling, Company AVL

Great to discuss not only with professionals, but also with the apprentices!

Light bulb moments

City of 's-Hertogenbosch: „Bildung findet Stadt“ forms an excellent publication to take notice of and see how ideas can be transferred to the city and region of 's-Hertogenbosch“.

Hans Cox, employers' organisation BZW: „Thefuntheory.com, I liked the movie of the piano staircase, the small, positive and creative stimulus to get results. The thought of: how is it possible that there is such a difference in attitude towards internships between Austrian (enthusiastic to train and hire) and Dutch (reluctant) companies whereas the economic situation in the two countries seems comparable. Making use of Youth coaching experts to prevent dropout“.

Jan Willem v.d. Berg, Baanderherencollege Boxtel : „Making use of portfolio within the schools in Graz. Learning in context (Radio Igel) is more stimulating than just theoretical. As always a metaphor (penguin) or visualization of a problem/thought leads to a better understanding“.

Kees Born, Koning Willem 1 College: „Using the principles of multiple intelligences in all kind of educational activities. Representatives of parents meet also representatives of teachers in order to talk about the school and the education“.

René van de Meerendonk, Rodenborchcollege: „Portfolio for students, the way of presentation by students, job orientation at the age of 13 years, speed dating for students looking for an internship“.



4th Projectmeeting and final conference in 's-Hertogenbosch: 15.6. 2014 – 18.6. 2014

16 representatives from Graz visited Den Bosch in June 2014. Two experts from the field of education and economy, teachers and a headmaster from secondary schools, as well as partners from the City of Graz and STVG travelled to the final meeting.

In this visit we especially worked on the following themes/topics:

- How to increase the involvement of companies for education/cooperation with schools
- Lifelong learning (is there any policy on this in the involved companies in this Comenius project)
- Leading role local government; to stimulate that companies start their company, that companies stay in Graz/'s-Hertogenbosch (good entrepreneurs-climate), to stimulate a better connection between unemployed people and actual and future jobs
- Demand orientated approach by local government, labour office, schools. Basis is the demand of the labour market; schools, labour office, local government take this as a start for their work/approach
- Tailor-made arrangements (develop innovative instruments, flexible structures)
- Career orientation and career guidance (again demand of the labour market starting point for activities by schools/STVG etcetera)
- Labour market information; only by good knowledge of the local/regional labour market you can prepare young people to the right jobs/companies
- HRM-policy; important to know what HRM-policy is made by the involved companies. Schools and local government can focus on a better way to realise a well-functioning labour market!

Local government

State of the art by Veronique Scharenborg, programme manager: Focus, issues, results and good practices. Update European priorities and new applications Erasmus+ by Theo van de Veerdonk. TOM-project, Marijke Mahieu and Action Plan Learningjobs, Ton v.d. Berselaar

Schools

Visit Rodenborchcollege, secondary school. Presentation of career orientation and career guidance by René van de Meerendonk. Visit Jeroen Boschcollege. Presentation about career orientation and career guidance, vision of the school, tour in the school, with special focus on Technasium

Visit Koning Willem 1 College, concept of Water Factory; welcome by Geert Swinkels, project leader of the Water Factory, presentation and tour by two students, process operators at the Water Factory. Presentation by Jouke Dijkstra project manager Techxperience. General purpose of TechXperience is to stimulate interest in technical professions and enterprising craftsmanship.



Companies

Visit Heineken Beerbrewery 's-Hertogenbosch. Starting with a presentation of the Heineken Company, a plant tour and a product confrontation were on our agenda.

Light bulb moments

“No one is left behind – there are customized programmes for high school students, pupils at risk and also school dropouts to enable them to work their way into the world e.g. the TOM project. Especially the TOM project and the possibility to talk to young people there, showed that sometimes you just need to give the people at risk a second chance, have an open ear for their problems and sometimes you just need to be a “constant person” for a rough period in their life.”

“Also the large international company Heineken supports the regional projects. Whether (youth-) employment or education, Heineken and many other companies have the same vision: employers are on the lead.”

“The water factory is an example of a high quality and above all very practical education, within the protected school environment. It’s more than just a model in the school; it is a real company that is used as a learning field.”

“Classrooms do not always consist only of benches and tables, an open space concept like in the Jeroen Bosch College Technasium looks much more inviting and friendly than the average classroom in Austria, and pupils seem to enjoy it too!”

“Career orientation and guidance should be team work of all stakeholders in school. At the Rodenborchcollege we saw this great approach and we also should try to focus on that much more than we already do in Austria. And I really appreciate, that the presenters were speaking openly about their experience and also pointed out problems and not only the nice site of their daily work.”



Good Practice | Bildung findet Stadt

Kind of good practice

Educational Strategy City of Graz

Target group

Stakeholder City of Graz

Description

The city of Graz is working intensively to optimise future opportunities for young people. To meet the new challenges successfully, the Department for Education and Integration has worked together with top-class external experts and developed the first educational strategy of the City of Graz 2013- 2020. 8 different groups have worked on the strategy with the title „Bildung findet Stadt“.

Following areas were included in the working groups:

- Elementary education.
- Transition points 1 and 2 (Kindergarten – elementary school –secondary schools).
- Inclusion.
- Elementary school and lower secondary school.
- Transition point 3 (school and the world of work).
- Transition point 4 (upper-level secondary schools).
- Support systems.
- Compulsory education for all and acquisition of educational qualifications and adult education.

In addition as a transversal issue, there was a special focus on the promotion of potentials. The aim is to establish the City of Graz as a City of Education and to show improvements and to implement new models as well as pilot projects. It turned out that through opening the discourse between the invited experts the flow of information about existing educational activities was promoted strongly. It also fostered networking between different stakeholders. This improves the access to education and further training for all citizens of Graz.

Aims

- To develop an educational strategy for Graz.
- To optimise future opportunities for young people.
- To meet the new challenges successfully.

Do's

- Involve experts of different areas, not only from the field of education - look beyond the scope of the world of schools.
- Regular meetings of working groups.
- Professional moderation of the process.

Don'ts

- Visions without concrete fields of action.
- Process without statements.
- Unrealistic objectives – always keep resources and the legal framework in mind.

Further Information

City of Graz | Department for Education and Integration | www.graz.at | Graz, Austria

Skills Portfolio

Kind of good practice

Teaching Tool

Target group

Pupils from 10 to 14 years

Description

Transitions from one school to another school or from school to world of work are always difficult and exciting times in students' lives. The process of creating a skills portfolio can help students to lower this anxiety. It helps them in many ways to "take stock" of what they know in terms of their knowledge and their skills. This will help them to make the right decisions concerning school or job choice and supports them in job interviews.

Aims

- To help students to recognise their strengths.
- To support career choices.
- To use it as evidence of the students' skills.
- To foster different competences like self-confidence, respect, team spirit etc.
- To be used for the job application process.

The idea of a Skills Portfolio comes from the way that artists make up a portfolio of their best work to show to a client or employer. It focuses on ones abilities in different skill areas and it also shows your skill development. The process of creating a portfolio will help the students to organise their work and life experiences. It is intended to be reviewed and updated regularly by the students. By doing so, students can develop an awareness of their strengths but also of the areas needing development.

There is a wide range of "evidence" that can be used in the portfolios to show the abilities in various areas, such as: Certificates, texts or test results you are proud of, feedback of a teacher, references, pictures of successful art work, reflection on your work and many more. Teachers support the students by providing a reflective, learner- centred educational environment and offer supporting materials, but the students are supposed to take responsibility for their portfolio.

The Skills Portfolio summarises your best work with the focus on your abilities and shows the students' individual efforts and the progress they have achieved. Self-assessment and awareness of others play an important role in this process. It is a proof of successful work in school and out-of-school showing your personal strengths and specialised knowledge, as well as your competences.

Self-competence, social competence and methodological competence are the three main competences that are being trained. That includes developing self-confidence and respect for rules, team spirit and tools to handle conflicts and work successfully in teams. A special focus is also set on presentation skills.

Do's

- Let the pupils decide themselves what they put in their portfolio.
- Spread ideas and coach your pupils.
- Give them enough "space", but show them that they are responsible for their work

Don'ts

- Working on a portfolio without proper guidance.
- To skip the reflection phase.
- Negative criticism.

Further Information

NMS, BG and BRG Klusemannstraße | www.klusemann.at | Graz, Austria

Career – orientation Fair

Kind of good practice
Orientation/Guidance Day

Target group
Pupils in career orientation process

Description

Each year on a certain day as many companies as possible are invited to the school NMS Webling to present their companies and to talk to the pupils at a career-orientation fair. So in this protected setting students have the chance to get in contact with different companies and maybe, also their future employer.

Aims

- To support pupils to find the right apprenticeship.
- To show pupils possibilities and different career pathways.
- To foster communication between pupils and enterprises and other schools.

Therefore different organisational planning and settings need to be done by a staff member of the school:

- Set a date.
- Send invitations to different businesses from the region and also other schools (keep the contact on a list for following years and the next career fair!).
- Try to get in contact with the businesses and schools personally for instants at other network events or meetings.
- Call all invited businesses and schools.
- Prepare the right place within your school and adapt it according to the needs of the companies and schools.
- Prepare your students: give them information in advance; let them find some interesting questions; tell them about the organisation and agenda of the day.
- And after the career fair: reflect the experiences and give extra information if needed.

The annual career guidance fair primarily supports the students in their decision making.

It is designed to give value to all partners: companies, students and the school itself. Students have already found through this career information fair trial courts as well as apprenticeships.

The experience with the professional orientation fair is for the school and the businesses as well as for the secondary schools very positive.

Do's

- Prepare students for the event.
- Contact companies and schools personally.
- Invite as many different companies as possible, it doesn't matter if they are hiring at the moment or not, to show students different options.

Don'ts

- Passive behaviour: companies and schools do not come without a proper invitation.
- Skip the follow up after the fair
- Take the acquisition of enterprises in the following year for granted.

Further Information

NMS Webling | www.nms-webling.at | Graz, Austria

Your Job

Kind of good practice

Orientation / Guidance project with companies

Target group

Pupils in career orientation process

Description

“Your Job-Use your talent!” is a project that acts as a linking pin between currently eight corporate partners – leading companies of the region - and young people, parents and schools in Graz. The main topic of the initiative is to support career orientation and guidance activities and to advise youngsters about careers in industrial partner companies.

Aims

- To link between school and companies.
- To support career choices of young people with specific information about partner companies and jobs in industry.
- To find new approaches in working with companies, schools, pupils and parents.

The project Your Job started in the school year 2011/2012 and offers young people specific information about:

- Apprenticeship in the Your Job companies (different professions, career opportunities).
- How to apply and information about job interviews.
- Companies’ expectations of new employees and benefits (apprenticeship remuneration, salary, bonuses, ...).

Therefore the team of Your Job offers counselling sessions in individual and small group settings. Your Job offers its own support programme not only for pupils but also for young people in their career orientation process. Also parents are a major target group. They can ask for support and information to accompany the career choice process of their children in a proper way. Parents get bundled information about career paths, procedures, criteria and expectations of the partner companies. Your Job encourages to contact the instructors of partner companies and their human resources managers (i.e. parents’ evenings) and allows parents to participate in factory tours and to attend counselling sessions with the young people.

For schools and teachers the initiative „Your Job -Use your talent!“ offers next to information, personal networking with instructors of partner companies and personnel managers. They also support coordination and organisation of exciting interactions between schools and companies, like company visits for school classes, teachers and parents. Two major events are the “Action Day” a special day for pupils (and their parents) where they can visit a partner company and experience the working-areas by doing. And the “Navigation Day” where pupils can check their skills and competences necessary for a career in the Styrian industry by solving different exercises and tests. „Your Job -Use your talent!“ is created and funded by eight Styrian industrial companies which work together to find new approaches in working with schools and education.

Do’s

- Partner meetings with companies on regular basis.
- Individual support and “be all ears” for every stakeholder: school / teacher / pupil / parent and partner companies.
- Follow up of all activities.

Don’ts

- To take the flow of information for granted.
- To forget about the involvement of parents.
- To neglect the interests and strengths of the children.

Further Information

Your Job | www.your-job.at | Graz, Austria

De Bono Centre of Expertise KWIC

Kind of good practice

Creativity, innovation and 21st century skills

Target group

Students, teachers, management

Description

Dr. Edward de Bono is regarded by many as the leading authority in the field of creative thinking, innovation and the direct teaching of thinking as a skill. He is equally renowned for his development of the Six Thinking Hats technique and the Direct Attention Thinking Tool (D.A.T.T.) framework.

Aims

Continuous innovation and preparing for the future by:

- Promoting curiosity.
- Consciously looking for alternatives.
- Suspending judgement.
- Looking at other persons' views / perceptions.
- Having fun.

The De Bono Centre of Expertise (DBE) initiates distributes and develops the legacy regarding creative, critical and metacognitive thinking aimed at education and personal development. The DBE mainly focuses on the development of an alternative way of thinking. A way which leads to exploring ideas, creating possibilities and which looks at a variety of correct answers instead of the one single correct answer.

The role of the De Bono Centre of Expertise is closely linked to the school policy of Koning Willem I College. Creative, critical and metacognitive thinking addresses all talents, is innovative and provides us a thinking framework for a better world and for providing better direction to Koning Willem I College as Community College.

Core activity of the De Bono Centre of Expertise is the implementation of creative, critical and metacognitive thinking at Koning Willem I College by means of training, facilitating, developing, researching/analysing and distributing. The DBE does this by offering its services to the various departments. The DBE provides education and training to employees of Koning Willem I College. And of course teachers can apply this again when working with students.

Creativity itself has three aspects: Knowledge, Skills and Attitude. We start off with knowledge and skills and at the same time work to instil a creative attitude. If you take a meteorological metaphor you can say that we change the temperature (knowledge, skills) in the hope, expectation of a different climate. Changes in temperature can take place in a relatively short time. However, climate changes and culture changes should be viewed over a longer period of time. As far as it is within our sphere of influence we develop the following creative / entrepreneurial competencies.

A creative person takes initiative and is willing to take risks; suspends judgment, judges constructively (as opposed to binary judgement); has perseverance; makes (unusual) connections; is cooperative; is curious; is goal orientated; keeps looking for alternatives; empathises and is able and willing to see other people's point of view and is decisive

Creative thinking and adaptability are also identified as one of the basic skill sets deemed necessary in today's workplace. If creative thinking is considered to be critical to professional success, and critical to success in one's personal life, then institutions of education must sincerely consider the degree to which classroom experiences promote or undermine students' creativity. In this fast-paced and ever-changing world we live in, creative thinking is not a mere luxury, it is a basic survival skill.

Do's

- Pay attention to motivation.
- Creativity is not just a talent, but mainly a skill you need to develop: Develop those creative skills.
- Have a support system for people in the organisation; a creative centre of expertise.
- Involve all layers (students, teachers, management, CEO) in the organisation.
- Start simple.
- Give room for experimentation and trial & error.
- Involve stakeholders; world of business, government, social organisations.

Don'ts

- Don't forget the leaders in an organisation (teachers, management, and board). They play a crucial role; practice what you preach.
- Don't expect a recipe for implementation. Every organisation, every situation is different.
- Don't expect there are quick fixes; changes in culture take time.
- Don't "invent your own wheel"; collaborate (inter)nationally

Further Information

Koning Willem College | www.kw1c.nl | Den Bosch, The Netherlands

Traject Op Maat (T.O.M.)

Kind of good practice

Method/ Approach/ Intervention

Target group

Participants, most of the time, who live in the region of 's-Hertogenbosch, do not attend school, are in the age between 18 and 23 years old, don't have a "start-qualification" (no proper education, under Vocational Education level 2 or no secondary-school qualification of HAVO/VWO) and don't have a job or social allowance.

Description

The T.O.M.-coach, together with the participant, finds out what he or she would like to do. Because of the fact that the participant didn't finish school, it is important to calculate the possibilities in finishing school as second chance. So going to school again or finding a job or going back to school in combination with a (part-time) job. Sometimes a realistic goal is just finding daytime activities.

Everyone has his or her own background, profile and capabilities. To take this into account all participants follow an individual programme, that's why the project is called T.O.M. (Traject Op Maat, in English: Tailor-Made Programme).

Part of T.O.M. is also: sports, art, training in social skills and expression. Also they go camping. All youngster tries to find out what they are good at and where their boundaries lie. Some youngsters are helped by making the right career choice or the choice for the right further education. Some youngsters are trained how to apply for a (new) job. Others get extra lessons in arithmetic or Dutch language. Youngsters are

Aims

- To find out what the youngsters are able to do.
- To find out what the youngsters want to do.
- To help them finding a school or a job; or finding a combination of school and a job.
- To find help when needed.
- To train social skills.

trained in daily rhythm, sometimes there is extra support from other organisations like Social Work.

When it is clear what kind of school or job one would want to execute in future, the T.O.M.-coach helps the youngsters to find a learning job in order to practice and see if this will be the final choice to focus on.

The T.O.M.-coach acts as a case manager and keeps an eye on the process of the individual. After having successfully finished the T.O.M.-programme and the next step has been made to school or to work, then the coach will still follow the youngster in the first half year after leaving T.O.M.

T.O.M. is voluntary, but it is not without obligations. The youngsters have to make the best out of it to make good choices and to keep arrangements.

Do's

- Personal approach, nice atmosphere.
- Group activities and a solid programme.
- Each youngster has a coach.
- Coaches must be in a line with each other.

Don'ts

- Unclear rules.
- Don't push too much.

Further Information

Traject Op Maat (T.O.M.) | www.tomdenbosch.nl | Den Bosch, The Netherlands

5* Noordoost Brabant Werkt!

Kind of good practice
Triple Helix Coöperation.

Target group

The target group are companies, educational institutions and governmental institutions, who are interested in creating a good functioning regional labour market.

Description

The programme "5* Noordoost Brabant Werkt!" has a mission to work together with the triple helix (Entrepreneurs, Government and Education) on a better functioning Regional Labour market.

Aims

There are 4 challenges:

- Stronger economic sectors through the presence of enough and well-educated staff.
- Promising jobs and sectors.
- Social inclusive; everybody can participate.
- Participation of weak youngsters in the labour market.

We have divided the labour market in five promising economic sectors. Each sector has its own specific problems and initiates projects in cooperation with the Triple Helix to improve the sector. The entrepreneurs are in the lead. They can point out the priorities of their sector. Some sectors can't find enough staff, because of lack of people with the right education or the lack of interest in the sector.

The development in the Labour Market is going fast and schools cannot always keep up. We start projects to develop new educational programmes to educate the sitting and future staff.

The sector has common themes; organizing entrepreneurs, regional mobility centre, sustainable employability, talent development and retention and promoting jobs. On these themes we initiate and support new activities.

We also develop in cooperation with the triple helix new projects for the unemployed and the weak youngster to help them to find a job. For example, there is a scholarship for youngsters after they have finished their education for getting work experience.

Initiators + booster team

The initiators are entrepreneurs who take the lead and are ambassadors for other entrepreneurs to participate in the programme. The participation of entrepreneurs is important because they know the labour market and what is necessary to change, improve or start-up. The booster team is responsible for connecting inside and outside the region, the finance and the communication.

The benefits?

- No shortage on staff
- Everybody participates

Do's

- Entrepreneurs in the lead.
- Chose the main sectors and let also the small businesses take part.
- Strategic and long term policy must come first
- Prevent conflict of interests between companies and the local government.
- Prevent conflict of interests between the local governments; trust each other.
- Notice that the partners from the triple helix have their own targets.
- Do what you say, and say what you do.
- Use good practices.
- Ask space for own rules and policy from the national government.

Don'ts

- Start-up projects because there is money available

Further Information

Agri&Food Plaza | www.agrifoodcapital.nl | Den Bosch, The Netherlands

Studying for a career

Career Organisation, (career) Gidens

Kind of good practice

Teaching tool

There is not only attention for making choices at the moment pupils have to choose their subjects or when choosing an education, but all time during the time at our school, pupils work on their career prospects.

Target group

All classes Pupils from 12 to 16 years

Description

The Baanderherencollege (BHC) vmbo is a proactive school concerning career orientation and counseling (COC), with trips to the flexible school. The policy for this has been embedded in the COC policy plan in which the direction and final goal of the COC on the Baanderherencollege vmbo are written. In Career Orientation and Counseling this shows in the vision to stimulate learning to choose as a competition.

The Baanderherencollege vmbo puts the students learning progress centrally and wants to stimulate that students take responsibility for their own career. Career orientation and counseling prepares students well to make choices and finish their study with concepts such as self concept clarification, widening of the horizon and learning to choose.

The study environment in which this development takes place is a career orientated study environment. The education association has been set up in a way that the student can gain experience that suits him and is practically orientated.

- COC is embedded in the curriculum with integrated programmes (amongst which project education and stimulation). COC will be offered integrally as a thread through education.
- The dean, the mentors and the teachers are the actors of COC.
- COC is preventative and optimizing and the study and career questions of the adolescent will be adjusted to prevent problems and to enhance motivation. Extra attention will be given to improve relevant competitions.

To let students experience the short term effects of their learning process and to enhance their orientation on the job market, as many parties from Boxtel as possible have made agreements to provide work experience possibilities and tasks. For example, finding internships for the students isn't a problem. In addition an architect designed the hallway of the school and the students executed it.

To optimize connection with secondary education, the Baanderherencollege vmbo has developed (exclusive) learning paths in cooperation with external parties.

Aims

- To help students to make conscious career choices based on their talents, motivation and interests.
- To guide students to "a flexible career for life".
- To help students to become employable.

Do's

- More emphasis on guidance and less on orientation.
- Create insight in talents and possibilities, and motivation by reflection
- Individual approach
- Work together with companies
- Let students do an internship

Don'ts

- Push your own vision
- Think the student can do it on its own
- Focussing on just occupational orientation – always focus on the student talents.

Further Information

Baanderherencollege Boxtel | www.bhc.nl | Boxtel, The Netherlands

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.

Romana Knorre
STVG
Austria

Theo van de Veerdonk
Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch
Netherlands



The project partner regions 's-Hertogenbosch and Graz want to improve the connection between companies, schools, local government and other stakeholders in the field of education and the labour market. They want to contribute thus – in an indirect way – to the reduction and prevention of early school leaving by supporting different activities between the stakeholders.

CHAIN was about exchanging ideas and good practices between the partner regions and the project partners in the cooperation between those stakeholders in the field of education and the labour market.

The CHAIN project partners have found out that there are many ways – many ideas and many practices – to promote and to maintain cooperation between the stakeholders in the field of education and the labour market. The most important factor for a successful cooperation is the personal commitment – the vision and passion – of the involved people, good relationships between them, and the will of each stakeholder in the field of education and the labour market to cooperate with external partners.



's-Hertogenbosch



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