

Proposals for improving the vocational education and training in Austria

Transnational Forum EFFECT – “Matching Skills to Support Career Development

öibf Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training

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Guidance: subject or teaching principle?

In Austria, the guidance and information is **embedded in the framework curricula** for compulsory education. But: **no binding requirements**, whether this is to be implemented in the form of a separate school subject or in the form of a cross-curricular teaching principle.

- At general secondary schools (Hauptschule) and new secondary schools (Neue Mittelschule), in the 7th and 8th form very often there is a separate subject with a fixed amount of weekly hours
 - At the lower level of academic secondary schools guidance and information is integrated in the curricula of several subjects (e.g. German, English, history, geography), but the amount of learning units reserved for guidance depends on the motivation of teachers and the resources available
- **uniform rules** of a mandatory minimum degree of learning units **necessary**

Guidance: internal services

Many schools have Career guidance teachers who are specially trained, but

- they do not have sufficient time resources
- they need the support and cooperation of other subject teachers
- they must have access to extracurricular information and counseling services

→ it is necessary to

- **Provide uniform rules** for all schools in regard to career guidance teachers
- Establish and strengthen networks for career guidance teachers

Guidance: external services

There are **numerous** external information, advice and guidance **facilities** for different needs and target groups:

- General information on vocational education and training possibilities
- Individual and group counseling and tests
- Workshops and application trainings
- Career fairs, company visits, visits by representatives in schools

But these services are not always available

- With a sufficient regional coverage
- For all target groups (girls, boys, migrants, young people with health problems or disabilities; parents; teachers)

→ local, regional and national **coordinating bodies required**

Guidance: long term continuous process

Guidance should not only be provided only at the 7th and 8th form in occasional learning units and activities but should:

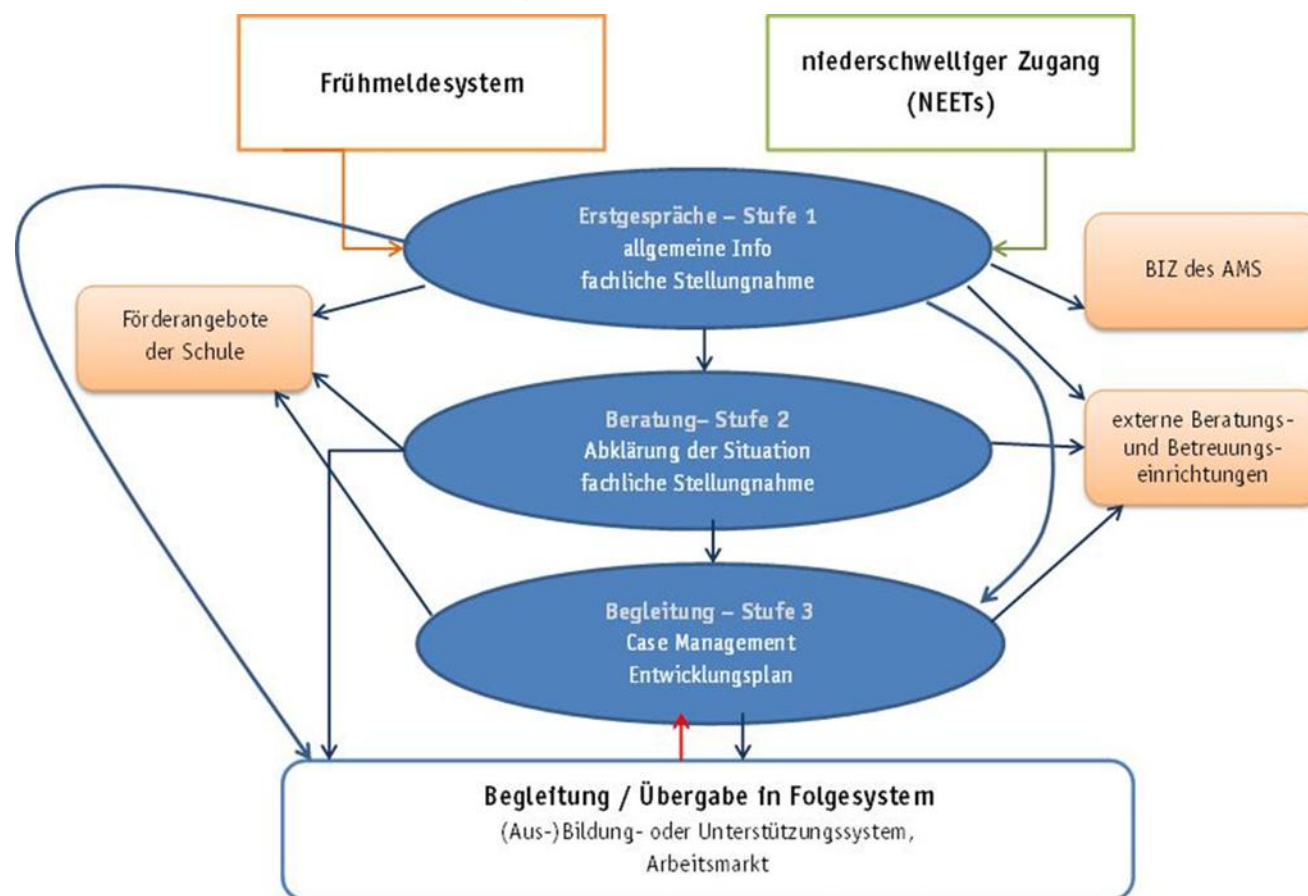
- be organized as a continuous learning process
- cover all ages and types of schools (from kindergarten to upper secondary level) in an age-appropriate processing
- include all forms of information exchange
- contain sufficient practical elements
- actively involve parents

Case Management:

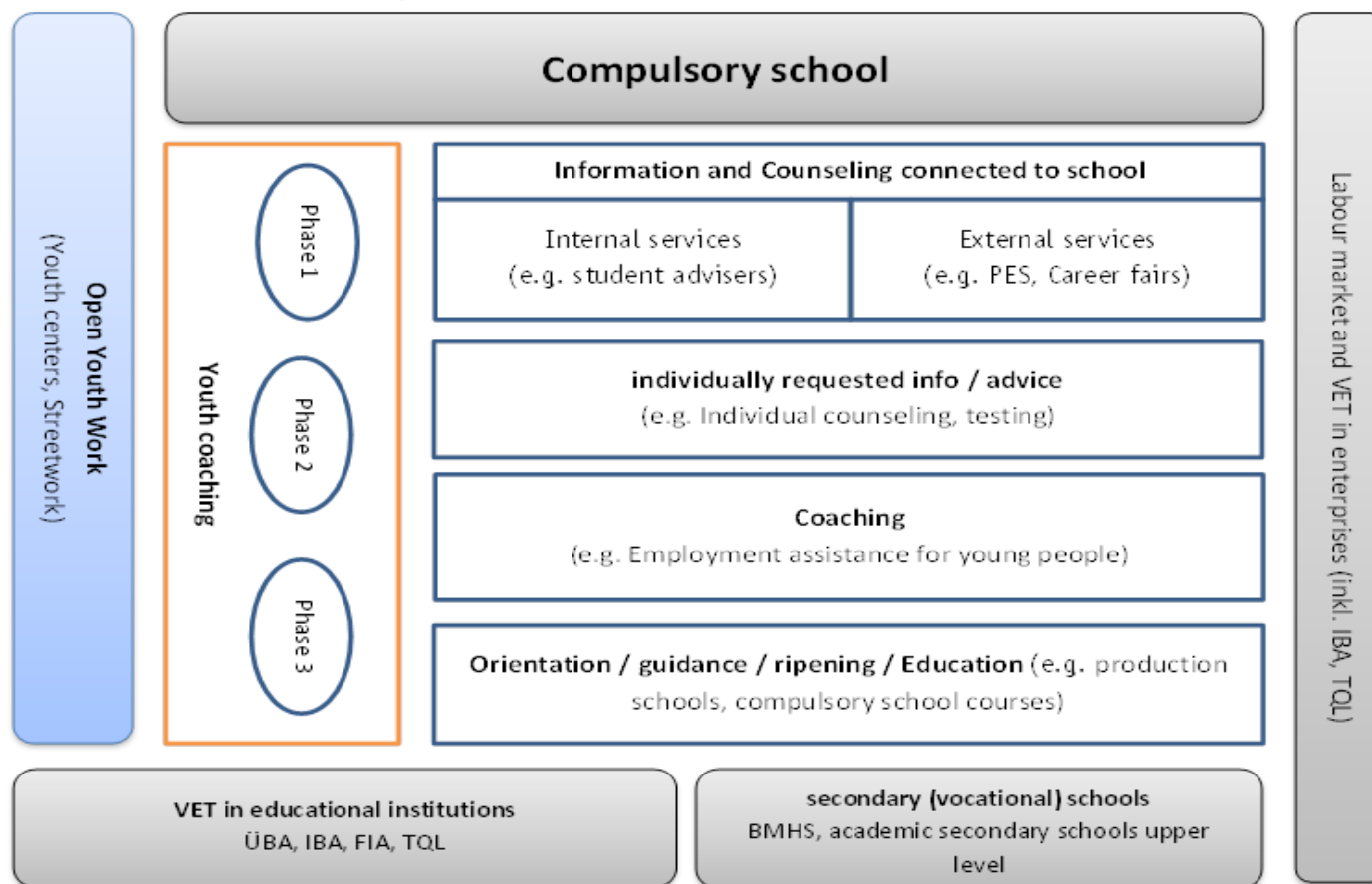
Early school leavers are a central problem of the transition from education to the labor system. To reduce the number of dropouts, comprehensive strategies are required. One of these measures is “*Jugendcoaching*” (Youth coaching) which is currently being piloted in several states. This measure provides

- a low-threshold access for young people of compulsory school age at risk of exclusion
- a multi-step process that is focused on the different information and counseling needs
- flexible networking with school-based and external consulting services
- a stable individual support through consistent counselors

Youth coaching:



Case Management:



Apprentice Coaching:

Dropouts and apprentices who do not take the final exam or fail to pass the exam represent an increasing challenge for the Austrian dual system. In order to prevent drop outs a new measure, the “*Lehrlingscoaching*” (apprentice coaching) was developed. This measure is currently in the pilot phase in some states and offers coaching to both apprentices and training companies in regard to

- training-related problems
- work-related problems
- individual problems of apprentices

Outcome-oriented curricula

Outcome-oriented and competency-based development of curricula for both VET schools and the dual system):

- Joint project for re-designing the development of curricula for vocational education and training in the dual system financed by the Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth (BMWFJ)
- Members of the project group: representatives of the BMWFJ, research institutes (ibw, öibf), representatives of vocational schools and enterprises
- Aim: Simultaneous development of curricula for vocational schools and training regulations for companies with research facilities in consultation with representatives of enterprises and vocational schools (Currently: bargaining process between social partnership organizations)

Outcome-oriented examinations

Outcome-oriented and competency-based development of exams have to be provided in order to validate and certify the competences acquired. In this context, several actors are required

- The Board which develops the Curricula for the dual system
- The enterprises which have to adapt the way of training
- Institutions of further and adult education
- The Public Employment Service (AMS) which provides 40% of the funding for vocational education and training in regard to conditions of Tender

Train the trainers: initial education

In the Austrian dual system company trainers must have completed a relevant vocational training and have to provide adequate professional practice. In addition, a unique pedagogical-didactic enrollment is required. However, there is no mandatory further education for trainers. To improve and ensure minimum quality standards of vocational education and training in enterprises

- the initial training of the trainers should be intensified
- necessary to adopt a commitment to regular training for trainers
- soft skills and social skills need to be incorporated as important elements in the initial training and continuing education for trainers
- the entitlement to apprenticeships should be granted only for a given time. An extension of the entitlement should be bound to a recertification.

Thank you for your attention!