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GUIDANCE AND OUTREACH FOR  
INACTIVE AND UNEMPLOYED

GERMANY

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Author: Adrienne Huismann

Contributor: Ute Hippach-Schneider

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The thematic perspectives series complements the general information on vocational education and training (VET) systems provided in 'VET in Europe' reports. The themes presented in the series feature high on the European agenda.

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ReferNet is a network of institutions across Europe representing the 28 Member States, plus Iceland and Norway. The network provides Cedefop with information and analysis on national vocational education and training (VET). ReferNet also disseminates information on European VET and Cedefop's work to stakeholders in the EU Member States, Iceland and Norway.

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## **Guidance and outreach for inactive and unemployed**

Many countries across the European Union (EU) have high levels of unemployment and of inactive adults. These phenomena are frequently associated with low levels of qualification and insufficient basic skills. They may also reflect lack of adjustment between skills demanded in the labour market and skills developed in formal education and training. In both cases up-skilling and re-skilling solutions could be explored to increase the employability of adults.

The national reports developed by ReferNet partners reflect efforts done by Member States to reach vulnerable groups affected by unemployment and inactivity and help them reengage in learning and employment. The reports refer, in particular, to measures which may include young adults not in employment, education or training (NEET) and adults undergoing long term unemployment (LTU), given their persistence in many countries and the high challenges these groups face.

The policy strategies and initiatives in focus shed light over ways to support the most vulnerable to find learning and qualifying solutions. Career guidance and counselling support to people with decaying skills, low levels of motivation and insufficient basic skills are addressed. Its instrumental role in providing information, identifying skills needs, clarifying career options and developing positive attitudes towards learning is made clear.

Whenever possible, outreach measures were described, addressing the ones who fall out of the scope of standard policies to support registered unemployed or recent education drop-outs. Many reports entertain an important discussion on the entitlement to social protection and its effectiveness in addressing the challenges of all demographic groups.

Lastly, Cedefop trusts that these reports will provide an important characterisation of current opportunities and challenges across the EU in establishing appropriate upskilling pathways for adults. Current European policy initiatives urge MS to integrate skills assessment measures with flexible learning and validation solution, where guidance services and outreach will necessarily play a key role.

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## CHAPTER 1.

# Introduction: Indicators and issues related to NEET and LTU

### 1.1. Indicators and issues related to NEET

According to Eurostat <sup>(1)</sup>, the youth unemployment rate (per definition: age 15-24) in Germany in 2016 was the lowest in the European Union at 7.0 % of the active population and has been decreasing constantly since 2009 (11.1 %). Another indicator of youth unemployment published by Eurostat is the youth unemployment ratio (has the same numerator as the youth unemployment rate, but the denominator is the total population aged 15 to 24). This ratio in Germany in 2016 was the second lowest in the EU at 3.5 % just after the Czech Republic (3.4 %) and has been falling since 2009 (5.8 %).

In the same age category as used above (15-24), the NEET (young people neither in employment nor in education and training) rate <sup>(2)</sup> in Germany in 2016 was the fifth lowest in the EU at 6.6 %. It had been falling from 2009 (8.8 %) until 2015 (6.2 %). The NEET rate of young people in Germany aged 20 to 34 in 2016 was 12.4 % (number 7 in the EU) and has been decreasing since 2009 as well (15.8 %).

Another indicator published by Eurostat <sup>(3)</sup> is the percentage of “early leavers from education and training” for the age group 18 to 24. In 2016, 10.2 % of young people aged 18 to 24 in Germany were early leavers from education and training. This rate had been falling from 2010 (11.8 %) to 2014 (9.5 %) but has been increasing since then. In this case, Germany ranks average in the EU (EU-28: 10.7 %).

The Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB, Germany) monitors a similar indicator: The premature termination of apprenticeship contracts <sup>(4)</sup>. In 2015, 24.9 % of training contracts were prematurely terminated (2014: 24.6 %). However, a contract dissolution does not necessarily mean a final dropout from vocational education and training. According to several studies, in more than half of the cases, termination of

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une\\_rt\\_a&language=en&mode=view](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_a&language=en&mode=view)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-datasets/-/EDAT\\_LFSE\\_20](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-datasets/-/EDAT_LFSE_20)

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=edat\\_lfse\\_14&language=en&mode=view](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=edat_lfse_14&language=en&mode=view)

<sup>4</sup> Uhly, Alexandra in BIBB Data Report 2016, p 177-186.

contracts are not followed by a complete exit from VET but correspond to a change of company or the taking-up of a new occupation.

The reasons <sup>(5)</sup> given by apprentices for a contract dissolution are diverse, e.g. conflict with trainers and supervisors, a lack of quality in training, adverse working conditions, personal and health reasons and a wrong choice of occupation. Companies tend to state mainly the inadequate performance of trainees, their lack of motivation or integration into the company and mistaken ideas about the occupation. Therefore, the federal government has launched measures<sup>6</sup> to promote career orientation at an early stage and provide individual support and mentoring for apprentices before and during training (e.g. Career start coaching and VerA mentoring: Refer to Chapter 3).

One aspect of the issue “early leaving of education and training” are the dropouts of tertiary education. According to calculations made by the German Centre for Research on Higher Education and Science Studies (*Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschafts-forschung* - DZHW), more than a quarter of Bachelors students (28 %) never complete their studies. The federal government and other actors want to attract university dropouts into dual vocational training by developing measures to achieve a win-win situation for both parties (e.g. JOBSTARTER plus) <sup>(7)</sup>.

Rather than the NEET indicator, which is not commonly used in Germany, another indicator has been closely monitored since the nineties by BIBB <sup>(8)</sup>: The proportion of unskilled young people, i.e. with no formal qualification (*Ungelernte / nfQ: nicht formal Qualifizierte*). Evaluations conducted by BIBB based on the Microcensus data show that in 2015, 13.4 % (or 1.95 million) of young people aged 20 to 34 in Germany had no formal qualifications <sup>(9)</sup> and so lacked the prerequisites for qualified participation in working life <sup>(10)</sup>. This entails significant

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<sup>5</sup> Hensen, Kristina (2014): Early leaving from vocational education and training in Germany. Cedefop ReferNet, Thematic article.

<sup>6</sup> Berufsbildungsbericht 2017, BMBF, Bonn.

<sup>7</sup> See BIBB Data Report 2016, Chapter C, p 385-428.

<sup>8</sup> See BIBB Data Report 2017, Chapter A11, p 323-335.

<sup>9</sup> People who have not yet completed vocational training or higher education (e.g. pupils, apprentices and students) and those doing voluntary service are not counted as people with no formal qualifications.

<sup>10</sup> This group is very heterogeneous. The main part are low-qualified people who tend to have problems on the labour market but there are also some people who have started but not completed training or a course of studies. The latter are formally regarded as having low qualifications or as unqualified but have fewer problems integrating into the labour market because they have already acquired competences and often only break off training when they have found prospective employment.

negative consequences for individuals and their opportunities to earn a living and for society as a whole.

Both the rate of unskilled young people and the absolute number of those without formal qualifications aged 20 to 34 have not improved compared to 2013 and 2014. Reviewing results according to age cohorts provides the following picture: there are fewer unskilled among the younger adults (e.g. 20-24) than among older age groups (e.g. 25-34). In 2015, the percentage of unskilled in the age group 20 to 34 was lower among young women at 13.1 % than among young men (13.7 %). Young people with a migration background more often lack formal qualifications. While 8.8 % of young Germans without a migration background (age 20-34) had no formal qualifications in 2015, the proportion of young migrants (age 20-34) who were unskilled was more than three times as high (29.8 %). The number of refugees arriving in Germany and their level of qualifications is expected to have a major impact on future developments in the numbers of young people without formal qualifications.

Young people with no school-leaving certificate run a particular risk of not gaining formal qualifications: 70.2 % of 20 to 34 year-olds among them were without formal qualification in 2015. The proportion of unskilled young people falls inversely as the level of school leaving qualification increases (lower secondary school certificate: 31.4 %, intermediate school leaving certificate: 9.3 % and higher education entrance qualification: 4.5 %). BIBB's first evaluation of the National Education Panel Study (NEPS) <sup>(11)</sup> show the important role of the family background: the parents of unskilled young people are often without formal qualification (and even without school leaving certificate) themselves. BIBB also analysed the factors of a successful transition from lower secondary school (leaving certificate in Grade 9) into VET, based on the NEPS data: About half of lower secondary school leavers could directly start a vocational training. Most of the other half started a transitional measure (e.g. introductory training, prevocational measures). Based on these findings, the federal government has launched measures <sup>(12)</sup> to provide individual support and mentoring particularly targeted at pupils of lower secondary schools, at risk of not obtaining their school leaving certificate and further formal qualification (Career start coaching: refer to Chapter 3.1) and at apprentices at risk of dropping out of VET (*VerA* mentoring: refer to Chapter 3.2).

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<sup>11</sup> BMBF funded pilot project.

<sup>12</sup> Berufsbildungsbericht 2017, BMBF, Bonn.

## 1.2. Indicators and issues related to LTU <sup>(13)</sup>

The federal employment agency defines unemployment <sup>(14)</sup> as follows: Persons aged 15 to 64 years registered unemployed; not working for 15 or more hours per week nor participating in a programme of active labour market policy; and looking for a job of 15 hours or more per week. Long-term unemployed are those who have been registered as unemployed and actively seeking employment for 12 months and more.

Unemployment in Germany reached a record level in 2005 with 4.86 million. The number of LTU attained its peak one year later (2006) at 1.86 million. As a result of the labour market reforms in 2005 and the economic upturn in 2006, both the unemployment and long-term unemployment dropped significantly. This decrease slowed down temporarily during the economic and financial crisis three years later. Since 2011, the number of LTU was stable at just above one million. This phase of stagnation ended with a significant decline in unemployment and long-term unemployment in 2016: the annual average of registered unemployed was 2.69 million (3% less than in 2015). Out of these, 993,000 or 37% were LTU (4.4% less than in 2015). The only category of LTU experiencing a minor rise were those who were unemployed for 48 months or longer.

People with two or more placement obstacles, especially people aged 55 or older and people with a low level of qualification, have a higher risk of becoming long-term unemployed: In 2016, an average of 69 % of LTU were low-skilled or aged 55 and older. An average of 555,000 elderly people (aged 55 and older) were unemployed in 2016 (3 % less than in 2015), of whom 272,000 (49 %) were LTU (decline of 3 % compared to 2015). In 2016, an average of 1.26 million or almost half of the unemployed did not have a (formal) vocational qualification. 42% of them were LTU, compared to 33% of unemployed with vocational qualification. 54% of all long-term unemployed had not completed a vocational qualification. It is also more difficult for older or low-skilled LTU to find an employment compared to all LTU.

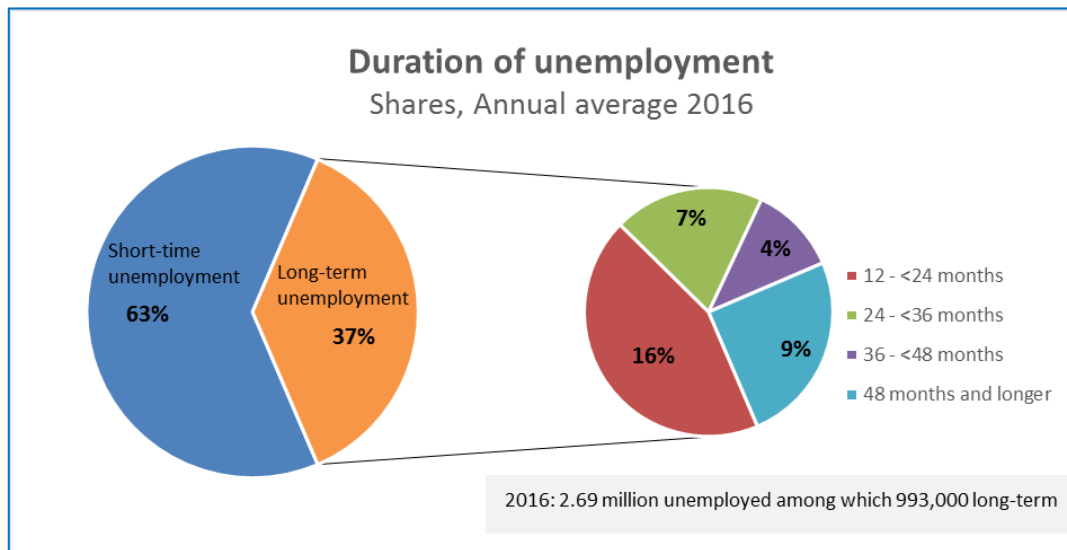
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<sup>13</sup> All data in this section was taken from Bundesagentur für Arbeit, Statistik/Arbeitsmarktberichterstattung, Berichte: Blickpunkt Arbeitsmarkt – Die Arbeitsmarktsituation von langzeitarbeitslosen Menschen 2016, Nürnberg, April 2017. <http://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de>

<sup>14</sup> Eurostat/ILO/OECD are using a different definition and concept of measurement (random sample survey versus registration) for unemployment. Unemployed are: Persons aged 15 to 74 years who are without work during the reference week; are available to start work within the next two weeks and have been actively seeking work in the past four weeks or had already found a job to start within the next three months.



**Figure 1. Duration of unemployment**



Source: Own graph based on statistics of the federal employment agency (refer to footnote 13, p 7)

Some other placement obstacles besides old age and low level of qualification are health problems, insufficient knowledge of German language and providing informal care for young children (especially single parent) or elderly. There are also some regional disparities: The lowest LTU rates can be found in South Germany (e.g. Bavaria: 0.9 %) and the highest, in big cities like Bremen (4.7 %), Berlin (3.1 %) and especially in cities of North-Rhine Westphalia (3.3 %), whereas in Eastern regions (Sachsen-Anhalt: 3.7 %, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: 3.6 %, Brandenburg: 3.5 % and Saxony: 2.9 %), the rural areas are more affected than the cities (<sup>15</sup>).

The number of short-term unemployed (less than 12 months) becoming long-term unemployed has dropped by 100,000 within 3 years (804,000 in 2013 and 700,000 in 2016). In 2016, the risk for short-term unemployed to become LTU was at 13.8 % as low as in 2011. In 2016, 187,000 LTU were able to take up a regular job (including self-employment) and 309,000 LTU started a vocational training or an upskilling measure. Still, the take-up rate of regular jobs in 2016 was more than six times lower among LTU than among all unemployed. However, once a long-term unemployed succeeded in taking up a regular employment (with social insurance), the probability that he is still in employment

<sup>15</sup> Bauer, Frank et al. (2016): Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit im regionalem Vergleich – In Ost und West sind Stadt und Land unterschiedlich betroffen. IAB-Forum 1/2016, S. 10-17.

after 12 months (57%) is only slightly under the corresponding probability for short-term unemployed.

## CHAPTER 2.

# National strategies in the VET sector

## 2.1. National strategies in the IVET sector addressing NEET

### 2.1.1. Strategies in IVET addressing NEET

- (a) Main strategy “Prevention instead of repair” starting in lower secondary school: *Educational Chains* <sup>(16)</sup> (refer to Chapter 3). This initiative addresses potential NEET with a close-meshed support net, using a comprehensive and holistic approach: nationwide standard instruments, early start in Grade 7, individual coaching through whole educational process until VET qualification (Career start coaching; VerA mentoring), transition measures between school and training e.g. introductory training, preparatory VET, support measures during training.
- (b) Strategy for attracting university dropouts into vocational training initiative <sup>(17)</sup>. Due to relatively high dropout rates of students in bachelor courses in Germany (29 %), the initiative aims to open up new opportunities in vocational training. It provides information on ways to integrate VET (also web services) and VET guidance at universities, and it brings SME and university dropouts together with the programme *JOBSTARTER plus* <sup>(18)</sup>.
- (c) Strategy for providing initial VET to young adults without qualification (age 25-34). It started in 2013 with the so-called *latecomers* initiative that was extended in 2016 and renamed into *future starters* initiative <sup>(19)</sup>: The initiative focuses on providing targeted funding for continuing training resulting in a vocational qualification (full and part time qualification measures in a recognized training occupations, external examinations, and modular qualification courses). The funding is not exclusively for the unemployed, but for all young adults without qualification.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.bildungsketten.de/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.bmbf.de/de/neue-chancen-fuer-studienabbrecher-1070.html>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.jobstarter.de/de/studienabbrecherinnen-und-abbrecher-1923.php>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/unternehmen/zukunftsstarter>

### 2.1.2. Strategies in youth social work addressing NEET

The ESF initiatives *JUGEND STÄRKEN* (“Encouraging Youth”) focus on disadvantaged young people (age 12-26) with and without migrant backgrounds who need special social support, in particular young people who are not or no longer reached by regular services in school, vocational training or as part of basic income and employment support services. Individual mentoring and targeted services support their educational, vocational and social integration with the goal of helping them to continue their education or training or pursue another form of education or training <sup>(20)</sup>.

- (a) The model programme *JUGEND STÄRKEN im Quartier* (supporting youth in deprived neighborhoods) supports local authorities in neighborhoods with development priority in efforts to help young people who need special support to manage the transition from school into work but are hard to reach. A further goal is to optimise existing structures for cooperation between public and independent youth welfare organizations, schools, employment agencies, job centres and community managers.

The programme provides young people with one-on-one counselling, support through case management and outreach youth social work (i.e. streetwork, low-threshold or mobile counselling and clearing). Additional social or environment-focused micro-projects, aim at improving young people's social skills as well as conditions in local communities with development priority (e.g. organisation of city district festival or exercise trail).

The programme is implemented by the youth ministry in conjunction with the environment and building ministry and is financed via the European Social Fund. The first pilot phase runs from 2015 to 2018. Since 2015, the programme has reached 22,000 young people, 37.3% of them from migrant background. Of 12,320 young people who have now ended their participation in the *JUGEND STÄRKEN im Quartier* projects, 58.9% have found employment or are in school-based or other vocational training.

- (b) In the *JUGEND STÄRKEN: 1000 Chancen* <sup>(21)</sup> project, young entrepreneurs (Wirtschaftsjunioren Deutschland) work as volunteers with social and educational experts to offer local low-threshold services to disadvantaged young people, providing them with practice-based insights into the world of work and prospects for their future careers (e.g. annual action “one day as

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.jugend-staerken.de/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/themen/kinder-und-jugend/integration-und-chancen-fuer-junge-menschen/jugend-staerken---1000-chancen/86198> and <https://www.1000-chancen.de/1000-chancen/darum-geht-es/>

apprentice"). The project aims at motivating disadvantaged young people to complete their school certificate, to set themselves career goals and to take chances. Since the project started in 2011, it has reached more than 6,000 young people.

Continuing under the title of *JUGEND STÄRKEN: 1.000 Chancen im Quartier*, the project was sustained as a supplementary component of the *JUGEND STÄRKEN* initiative in 2016 and 2017. Its main goals are to work more closely with the local authorities involved in *JUGEND STÄRKEN im Quartier* and intensify its focus on the target groups of young people with migration background and young refugees.

### **2.1.3. New strategy of cooperation between youth social work and labour market integration**

Pilot programme *RESPEKT* <sup>(22)</sup> (18 funded projects from Nov 2015 to Dec 2017) focuses on disadvantaged young people (age 15-25) who need low-threshold social support to manage the reintegration into school or VET, in particular young people who are not or no longer reached by regular services in school, vocational training or as part of basic income and employment support services. The support offered under these initiatives aims to reach out, activate and strengthen young people to reintegrate school or VET.

Despite a very broad and increasingly differentiated range of instruments of employment promotion, integration services (SGB II) and socio-educational aids for socially disadvantaged and individually disabled young people (SGB VIII), the NEET rate shows that a significant group of young people are not always reached by the offers of the social benefits system.

The *RESPEKT* pilot programme has therefore expanded the range of services provided by SGB II with additional service components and methods. The aim is to reach out and provide services that build personal, long-term relationships with the young, creating trust and security and paving the way for a continuous and sustainable path to education and work. Support may also be needed for housing, homelessness, the family situation and care, the financial situation and regional mobility. The central message of the programme is expressed by the term "respect", which takes into account the multi-dimensionality of the problems.

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.bmas.de/DE/Themen/Arbeitsmarkt/Modellprogramme/respekt-pilotprogramm.html>

The programme was initially limited until the end of 2017 with up to 30 million euros funding. During this period, 18 funded projects <sup>(23)</sup> provided additional low-threshold care and support services for young people in difficult circumstances to facilitate integration into educational processes, active employment promotion services, training or work and to ensure the transition to the further development process.

The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) has extended the funding of the ongoing projects for another year until 31 December 2018 (with up to 10 million euros funding). These projects can thus be monitored over a longer period of time in order to make the experience gained available for the implementation of § 16h SGB II, which was introduced into SGB II as a standard support instrument for the promotion of hard-to-reach young people on 1 August 2016.

A scientific evaluation of the *RESPEKT* pilot programme should determine whether the services provided in the funded projects are able to reach the target group.

Call for proposals for pilot projects based on new paragraph in German Social Code (§ 16h SGB II) "Support for young people until 25 years who are difficult to reach". Following the pilot programme *RESPEKT* described above, this new paragraph establishes the cooperation between standard support measures of youth social work and measures of reintegration in VET and labour market <sup>(24)</sup>.

## 2.2. National strategies in the CVET sector addressing LTU

One important national strategy is the prevention of unemployment through nation-wide standard (under the German Social Code) upskilling programmes specifically addressing those at risk of long-term unemployment: the low-skilled and the unemployed. This preventive approach has paid off in 2016: far less short-term unemployed became LTU compared to the past years (refer to

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<sup>23</sup> [http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Thema-Arbeitsmarkt/projekttraeger-und-projekte-RESPEKT.pdf;jsessionid=D850EA006BDFB9E7416607B3ABF57E01?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile&v=3](http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Thema-Arbeitsmarkt/projekttraeger-und-projekte-RESPEKT.pdf;jsessionid=D850EA006BDFB9E7416607B3ABF57E01?__blob=publicationFile&v=3)

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.jugendsozialarbeit.de/media/raw/Arbeitshilfe\\_Umsetzung\\_pp\\_16\\_h\\_SGB\\_II.pdf](http://www.jugendsozialarbeit.de/media/raw/Arbeitshilfe_Umsetzung_pp_16_h_SGB_II.pdf)

Chapter 1). Moreover, the federal government extended the active labour market policy (ALMP) measures addressing LTU.

Workers with low-level qualifications, the long-term unemployed and older employees in particular must be increasingly recruited into vocational further training. Qualifying further vocational training should also strengthen participants' motivation, resilience and basic skills and reduce the rate at which people drop out of ongoing training.

To achieve these goals, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) expanded support and funding for further vocational training through a new law to strengthen CVET and unemployment insurance coverage (AWStG) <sup>(25)</sup> which came into force on 1 August 2016. The law improves the access and overall conditions of CVET (for ex. allowances during training as well as financial incentives for passing exams) in order to attract more people with few or low-level qualifications, the long-term unemployed and older employees into qualifying continuing vocational training.

This new law complements and reinforces standard CVET support instruments under the German Social Code (SGB II and III), for example:

(a) *The FbW programme <sup>(26)</sup> promoting CVET.*

It is available not only to the long-term unemployed (supported by the Jobcenters under SGB II), unemployed and employees under threat of imminent unemployment, but also to workers with low levels of qualifications and employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (supported by the employment agency under SGB III sections 81-87). Eligibility for funding also depends on labour market conditions, i.e. whether the candidate could find employment without CVET; whether other labour market policy instruments could be more appropriate; and whether the candidate could, in all likelihood, return to the labour market as a result of the training. Eligible CVET courses aiming to obtain, update or upgrade a vocational (also partial) qualification are listed in the KURSNET <sup>(27)</sup> database of the federal employment agency. In 2016, the FbW programme had 324,000 new entries with a total spending of € 2.87 billion <sup>(28)</sup> (including the unemployment benefit paid during the training). Among the new entries in 2014, 13.1 %

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.portal-sozialpolitik.de/recht/gesetzgebung/gesetzgebung-18-wahlperiode/staerkung-berufliche-weiterbildung-und-versicherungsschutz>

<sup>26</sup> [www.arbeitsagentur.de](http://www.arbeitsagentur.de)

<sup>27</sup> <http://kursnet-finden.arbeitsagentur.de/kurs/>

<sup>28</sup> Berufsbildungsbericht 2017, p144

were long-term unemployed persons (compared to 7.8 % in 2009) <sup>(29)</sup> and 35 % were people without a vocational qualification.

(b) *The IFlaS initiative for responding to structural changes* <sup>(30)</sup>

Based on the German Social Code (SGB III, 81) <sup>(31)</sup>, it gives people with low-level qualifications living in structurally weak areas the opportunity to acquire a recognised vocational qualification or complete modular (partial) qualifications. The target groups are the unemployed and people at risk of becoming unemployed. Since 2012 the initiative is also helping those returning to work who have no VET qualifications (or have not worked in the occupation they trained for over four years) to get back into jobs subject to social insurance contributions. In 2016, there were 29,000 new beneficiaries through IFlaS, with a spending of €340.7 million.

(c) *The WeGebAU programme* <sup>(32)</sup> *(CVET for low-qualified and older employees in SMEs)*

Employment agencies can provide full or partial funding for qualification courses for employees aged over 45 working in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with fewer than 250 employees. Since April 2012, employees aged under 45 working in SMEs can also receive funding for CVET, regardless of their current qualification level, on the additional provision that their employer meets at least 50% of the course costs. Employees who have no or no useful vocational qualifications can also receive funding. Employers who release employees with low-level qualifications to take part in CVET to gain qualifications can receive a subsidy to cover the employee's pay for the period they spend in training. The changed prerequisites for funding resulted in a significant increase in participation rates. „WeGebAU“ has also been increasingly used to help employed geriatric nursing assistants upgrade their qualifications. Around 15,000 people began a funded CVET measure under “WeGebAU” in 2016 with a spending of €227.4 million.

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<sup>29</sup> BIBB-Datenreport 2016, Table B3.1-2, p 347

<sup>30</sup> [www.arbeitsagentur.de](http://www.arbeitsagentur.de)

<sup>31</sup> [https://dejure.org/gesetze/SGB\\_III/81.html](https://dejure.org/gesetze/SGB_III/81.html)

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/unternehmen/foerderung-weiterbildung>



(d) *Two social partners' initiatives providing modular vocational qualifications*

- (i) One pilot initiative by chambers of industry and commerce <sup>(33)</sup> in cooperation with employment agencies with 30 model projects testing the certification of modular qualifications.
- (ii) Another project providing modular vocational qualifications initiated by the German employers' associations and federal educational associations of the industry <sup>(34)</sup>.

The standard upskilling programmes, even those described above specifically addressing the low skilled and the unemployed, are hardly reaching the long-term unemployed. Therefore, the ESF Federal programme to reduce long-term unemployment <sup>(35)</sup> (example of practice described below in Chapter 3) is targeting specifically long-term unemployed, using a “work first” rather than a “train first” approach. However, the programme makes use of upskilling elements depending on the case.

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<sup>33</sup> <https://www.dihk.de/themenfelder/aus-und-weiterbildung/ausbildung/ausbildungspolitik/positionen/teilqualifikation>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.nachqualifizierung.de/>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.esf.de/portal/DE/Foerderperiode-2014-2020/ESF-Programme/bmas/2014-11-19-abbau-Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit.html>

## CHAPTER 3.

# Examples of practice

### 3.1. Example of practice addressing NEET: *Educational Chains* initiative (“Abschluss und Anschluss - Bildungsketten bis zum Ausbildungsabschluss”) <sup>(36)</sup>

In 2006, 8 % of school leavers in Germany (i.e. approx. 76,000) had not obtained a leaving certificate and 17.4 % of young people aged 20 to 34 (or 2.55 million) were unskilled (i.e. had no formal qualification). Facing these rates, the German government and federal states agreed in 2008 on a broad initiative aiming at helping everyone to achieve a school leaving and a vocational qualification. Various existing funding programmes, instruments and different actors were linked together, coordinated and further developed in order to cover the whole education and training process of young people, especially those at risk of dropping out. The *Educational Chains* Initiative started in 2010 with the aim to cut in half the rate of school leavers without a leaving certificate as well as the rate of unskilled young people by 2014. This was not quite achieved but there have been significant improvements as also mentioned in Chapter 1: the rate of school leavers without leaving certificate went down to 5.8 % (i.e. approx. 47,000) and the proportion of unskilled young people (age 20 to 34) dropped down to 13.3 % (or 1.93 million) by 2014. Based on several evaluations <sup>(37)</sup> and due to positive results, the initiative *Educational Chains* was prolonged until 2020.

The policy programme *Educational Chains*, as its name indicates, provides a close-meshed support net in all its facets and its coverage is very comprehensive. Its final goal is the completion of a qualification for all young people by supporting them in the following fields:

- (a) obtaining a general school leaving certificate;
- (b) making the transition from school to training; and
- (c) completing training successfully.

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<sup>36</sup> [www.bildungsketten.de](http://www.bildungsketten.de)

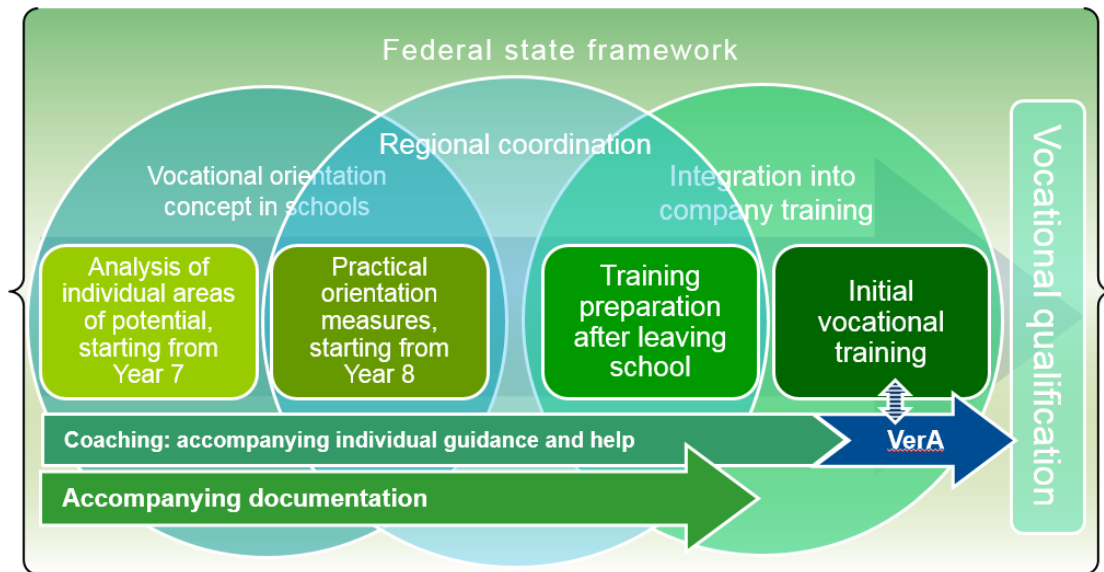
<sup>37</sup> Externe Evaluation der BMBF-Initiative “Abschluss und Anschluss – Bildungsketten bis zum Ausbildungsabschluss“ Endbericht, Ramboll Management Consulting GmbH, 28.11.2014. <http://www.bildungsketten.de/bk-evaluation-endbericht>. The next evaluation interim report is due in Sommer 2017.

The approach is strongly preventive and includes reengagement of young people who are at risk of dropping out. Indeed, a very important target group of the Educational Chains are disadvantaged young people who need special individual support to prevent dropout.

The support process of the *Educational Chains* sets in early (lower secondary: from grade 7) and continues until the completion of a vocational qualification, including the challenging transition period between finishing school and entering VET. The range of support instruments is very broad and most of them are now nationwide standard instruments anchored in the Social Code SGB, ensuring their sustainability. Several of these instruments address specifically disadvantaged young people more likely to drop out.

- (a) **Analysis of individual areas of potential** (starting from Grade 7). This is the first link in the *Educational Chain*. Young people learn about their strengths and this establishes the basis for the individual support provided.
- (b) **Vocational orientation** (starting from Grade 8). Practical vocational orientation usually begins in Grade 8. Its aim is to make young people aware of various occupational fields in an employment-oriented manner. Young people can test out their predispositions and talents at an early stage. They are then able to align their future career choice to these personal insights into the world of work.
- (c) **Individual coaching and support** (during school and apprenticeship)
  - (i) Career start coaching (from Grade 8). Salaried “career start mentors” accompany disadvantaged young people until they obtain a general school leaving certificate and as they make the transition from school to training.
  - (ii) VerA initiative to prevent training drop-outs (from first day of apprenticeship). Young people who experience difficulties in their apprenticeship can receive individual coaching by “senior experts” volunteers working for the “Prevention of training dropouts Initiative” called VerA. Senior experts are retired professionals with broad experience in their respective field of work.
  - (iii) Apprentices may also receive assistance via special training support measures provided by the employment agency.
- (d) **Measures in the transition period** (between school leaving and apprenticeship placement): Pre-VET measures and introductory training
- (e) **Documentation of process in career choice pass.**

**Figure 2. The overall concept of the *Educational Chains* programme**



Source: Bildungsketten, BMBF

For the programme to be systematic and effective, all actors involved at all levels are working together, forming regional and local cooperating networks, sometimes as one-stop offer (coordinated by the “federal government - federal states support group” with a service agency at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training BIBB):

- (a) Education ministry BMBF and ministry of labour and social affairs BMAS
- (b) Local (youth) employment agencies (vocational orientation services; career start coaches)
- (c) 16 federal states, local authorities and schools/teachers/pupils and their parents (especially general lower secondary schools)
- (d) Chambers, employers, trainers, youth services, associations and volunteers.

All through the *Educational Chains* (from Grade 8 until the obtaining of formal vocational qualification), the individual coaching approach is ensured by the two programmes described in detail below: career start coaching (Berufseinstiegsbegleitung BerEB) and VerA initiative (Verhinderung von Ausbildungsabbrüchen).

### **3.1.1. Career start coaching**

#### *3.1.1.1. Aim and concept*

Career start mentors assist young people as they make the transition from school to apprenticeship. The aims are to help individuals:

- (a) obtain a school-leaving qualification
- (b) with career orientation and choice of career
- (c) enter a vocational training relationship that remains stable for the duration of training

The career start mentors provide the young persons with continuous, individual support from school through to the vocational training stage. Measures start in the penultimate year (Grade 8) of lower secondary schools and continue for up to six months into the vocational training. If the individual does not manage a successful transition from school to vocational training, coaching is provided in the transitional phase for up to 24 months.

#### *3.1.1.2. Target groups*

Young people with low school achievements who wish to obtain a lower secondary school certificate (*Hauptschulabschluss*) but are likely to have difficulty doing so and/or encounter problems in the transition from school to vocational training (also inclusion issues). Furthermore, the programme is also aimed at pupils seeking to obtain a school-leaving qualification from a special needs school (*Förderschulabschluss*) if subsequent vocational training appears viable.

#### *3.1.1.3. Description of activities*

Career start coaching has many facets. The individual mentors are facilitators because they act as interface between all steps (school qualification, transition, VET), all actors (e.g. teachers, school, parents, employment agency and companies) and all support measures available in the career orientation process of the young person they are supporting:

- (a) Assessment and profiling: Skills, attitudes and preferences are assessed in Grade 7 or 8 during the so-called “analysis of areas of potential”.
- (b) Contacting: Based on the analysis of potentials, young people identified being at risk of leaving school without certificate are nominated by the teacher and career counsellor for additional assistance in the form of an individual “career start coaching”.

- (c) Caseload management: A career start mentor accompanies individually selected disadvantaged young people and manages a maximum of 20 cases.
- (d) Guidance and counselling: The career start mentor supports his cases in a comprehensive and holistic manner in their learning and career choices from Grade 8 until the first year of apprenticeship:
  - (i) builds a personal relationship with the young person, gains his trust,
  - (ii) reflects with him his interests, strengths and weak sides,
  - (iii) motivates and encourages him, helps him gain self-confidence and make positive experiences,
  - (iv) supports him in a holistic manner in all areas of life,
  - (v) develops and updates with him a long-term support plan,
  - (vi) helps him to develop realistic career plans,
  - (vii) communicates with and involves parents, teachers and school, career counsellor at the employment agency,
  - (viii) networking: helps contact companies for internship and apprenticeship placement,
  - (ix) organizes additional support measures if necessary: transitional, preparatory VET measures; assistance during training; volunteer senior personal coach taking over the counselling until the end of apprenticeship (VerA).

#### 3.1.1.4. *Qualification of career start mentor*

Education providers commissioned by the employment agency employ the career start mentors. The mentors should have a qualification at least equivalent to a bachelor degree (at least DQR level 6) and work experience with young people, e.g.:

- (a) Persons with a qualification as master, technician or certified specialist and a trainer aptitude qualification as well as experience in working with young people and training experience;
- (b) Persons with a bachelor degree in social pedagogy / social work;
- (c) Persons with a bachelor degree in pedagogy focusing on social pedagogy or youth welfare or with work experience with the target group;
- (d) Specialist and executive staff with professional experience, good contacts with the regional economy and experience in working with young people, including voluntary work.

#### 3.1.1.5. *Management and financing*

Career start coaching (*Berufseinstiegsbegleitung* BerEB), which was funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) from 2010 until the end of 2014, became a standard support instrument in Paragraph 49 of German Social Code (SGB III) in 2012.

In the 2014-2020 ESF funding period, career start coaching is being co-financed through ESF funding made available to the federal ministry of labour and social affairs (BMAS). A total of 1 billion euros has been allocated to these measures, about 500 million euros each from ESF funds and Federal Employment Agency (BA) funding. Measures started in March 2015 and will benefit to five cohorts of school leavers.

From school year 2014/15 until 2018/19, career start coaching will be implemented at almost 3,000 schools as part of the ESF Federal Government Programme *Co-financed career start coaching* launched by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS). Around 115,000 young people across Germany will benefit.

A service agency for all *Educational Chains* measures was established at BIBB. In 2016, it organised eight basis seminars with approx. 400 participants (career start mentors and other stakeholders of the employment agencies and federal states).

#### 3.1.1.6. *External evaluation reports*

The career start coaching programme (based on § 421s SGB III in former version) was evaluated by an external evaluator. The interim <sup>(38)</sup> and final <sup>(39)</sup> evaluation reports give recommendations regarding particular challenges during the coaching / mentoring.

#### **3.1.2. VerA initiative: Senior experts support apprentices <sup>(40)</sup>**

Many training contracts in Germany are prematurely terminated. Between 20 and 25 percent of young people fail to complete their training (refer to Chapter 1 and BIBB Data Reports). Even if many of them are later able to return to the

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<sup>38</sup> Evaluation der Berufseinstiegsbegleitung nach § 421s SGB III – Zwischenbericht, Tübingen, Berlin, Bielefeld und Frankfurt, July 2011.  
[http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Publikationen/fb-fb414.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile&v=2](http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Publikationen/fb-fb414.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2)

<sup>39</sup> Evaluation der Berufseinstiegsbegleitung nach § 421s SGB III – Abschlussbericht, Tübingen, Berlin, Bielefeld und Frankfurt, June 2014.  
<http://www.bildungsketten.de/evaluation-bereb-421s-endbericht>

<sup>40</sup> [www.vera.ses-bonn.de](http://www.vera.ses-bonn.de)

vocational education and training system, the move from school to the world of work is often anything but smooth. Although there are numerous projects offering support, such measures frequently only provide assistance until an individual has found a training place. *VerA* goes one step further by ensuring that a precisely tailored provision is in place during the period of training itself.

#### 3.1.2.1. *Aim, concept and target group*

Young people facing problems during vocational training (e.g. at the vocational school, in the company or in their private environment) and being at risk of dropping out of VET can receive individual support from volunteer coaches: the “senior experts” working for the “prevention of training dropouts” initiative called *VerA*. Senior experts are retired professionals with broad experience in their respective field of work. The education ministry BMBF funds *VerA* mentoring for up to 3,000 apprentices (or young people in introductory training) each year as part of the *Educational Chains* initiative, helping them complete their vocational qualification.

#### 3.1.2.2. *Description of activities*

**Contacting:** Apprentices, parents, companies, vocational schools, training guidance of the chambers or employment agency can contact the *VerA* team. If needed, the *VerA* mentors can take over the accompaniment started at secondary school by a career start mentor and continue the individual coaching until completion of VET.

Every apprentice requiring support can benefit from *VerA*. The range of services is wide and addresses the individual situations in which young people find themselves. Apprentices can contact *VerA* if

- (e) they are considering dropping out of VET
- (a) they have problems with the theoretical content of training
- (b) they are suffering from examination nerves
- (c) they wish to improve their knowledge of German
- (d) they lack motivation or feel overstrained
- (e) they are struggling with their career choice
- (f) they are experiencing conflict within the company (e.g. with their trainer or colleagues)
- (g) they have personal concerns

**Caseload management:** *VerA* uses the so-called “tandem model”: one personal training mentor to one apprentice. The mentor-apprentice tandem agrees on the themes they focus on and on how often and how long they meet. The support is open to all professions and VET types, all over Germany. The



VerA mentors continue to help if the apprenticeship contract is dissolved prematurely or if a new training company needs to be found. All VerA mentors are volunteers and support is provided individually and free of charge for the apprentice, the company and the vocational school.

*Web services and hand-outs:* The VerA website provides online information (e.g. peer reports) and hand-outs in different formats (e.g. leaflet, brochure, poster, post card) for different target groups (e.g. apprentices, in-company trainers, parents), free of charge: <http://vera.ses-bonn.de/service/materialien/>

*Guidance and counselling:* VerA links generations and creates a win-win situation: The training mentors enjoy working with young people and passing on their life and work experience in such a useful way. For their part, the apprentices benefit from the professional and personal skills and guidance the senior experts are able to provide. Apprentices and senior experts form a strong training tandem: The VerA mentors are always ready to listen and they act as confidants working together with the apprentices to identify solutions and possible ways forward. The teamwork is based on mutual trust. Support is provided in the following way:

- (a) Young people contacting VerA are usually allocated a training mentor near where they live within two weeks.
- (b) The apprentice and his mentor work together to agree targets and plan the support process.
- (c) They meet on a regular basis, right up until the end of training if required.
- (d) Cooperation takes place on a voluntary basis.
- (e) The company providing training is only notified of the support arrangements if the apprentice agrees.
- (f) The mentors answer technical questions, support in practical exercises and help preparing for examinations.
- (g) They offer orientation and help the apprentice to gain self-confidence and help themselves.
- (h) They strengthen a trusting relationship between in-company trainer and apprentice.
- (i) The mentors make also use of standard support measures for apprentices provided by the employment agency and the Jobcenter, e.g. support during training.
- (j) They cooperate with the environment of the apprentice and develop a network of partners to support the apprentice (e.g. chambers, employment agency, vocational school).

#### 3.1.2.3. *Staffing and qualification*

The *VerA* team is based at the Senior Experten Service (SES) in Bonn. It coordinates a pool of training mentors with the help of around 80 local regional coordinators. *VerA* is able to call upon the services of around 3,000 specially trained senior experts all over Germany and in all professions. *VerA* training mentors

- (a) are volunteers
- (b) are retired women and men with a wealth of work and life experience
- (c) are coming from various fields, e.g. industry, crafts, technical, commercial and social professions
- (d) are familiar with company processes
- (e) have the necessary specialist and training content knowledge
- (f) are highly motivated and enthusiastic about their task
- (g) can empathise with the problems and worries of young people
- (h) take the time that is needed
- (i) take part in a two-day course in order to prepare for their role

#### 3.1.2.4. *Management and financing*

*VerA* was initiated at the end of 2008 by the Senior Experten Service (SES), a leading German volunteer organisation for retired specialists and management staff.

It is supported by the German Association of Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK), the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts and Trades (DHKT) and the German Federal Association of the Liberal Professions (BFB). *VerA* is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research BMBF within the scope of the *Educational Chains* initiative. The current funding period is from 01.01.2015 to 31.12.2018 with a funding volume of € 11.15 million.

Since 2016, there is an additional focus on young migrants and refugees, *VerA* mentors cooperating with the “welcome guides” in small and medium enterprises, funded by the ministry for economic affairs, and a cooperation is planned in the project “Paths into apprenticeship for refugees”. *VerA* also started to cooperate with regional projects as the QuABB (qualified training mentoring in company and vocational school) in Hessen, in order to reach even more young people.

#### 3.1.2.5. *External evaluation reports*

An external report <sup>(41)</sup> concluded that approx. 80 % of *VerA* mentoring cases are successful in helping young people completing their apprenticeship. According to the report, 90 % of the interviewed apprentices and mentors would recommend *VerA*.

### 3.2. Example of practice addressing LTU: ESF Federal programme to reduce long-term unemployment <sup>(42)</sup>

As explained in Chapter 1, the chance for LTU to take-up a regular employment is much lower than for short-term unemployed. However, the probability that a LTU will still be employed one year after taking up a regular job is similar than for short-term unemployed. In this context, the “ESF federal programme to reduce long-term unemployment” is targeting specifically long-term unemployed, using a “work first” rather than a “train first” approach. The programme also makes use of upskilling elements.

#### 3.2.1. Aim and concept

This programme aims to integrate long-term unemployed persons at the margins of the labour market and claiming long-term unemployment benefits (under Book II of the German Social Code SGB II) into the general labour market on a lasting basis. The goal is to support 33,000 LTU from 337 Jobcenters in taking-up a sustainable employment.

This is to be achieved by:

- (a) Specifically recruiting companies for the programme
- (b) Providing financial compensation to the employer
- (c) Intensive coaching of participating LTU
- (d) Funding upskilling measures if necessary

#### 3.2.2. Target group

The programme addresses LTU, who would otherwise probably not manage to integrate the general labour market: LTU claiming benefits under SGB II who are

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<sup>41</sup> Evaluation der Initiative *VerA* des Senior Experten Service, Institut für Entwicklung und Strukturforschung GmbH an der Universität Hannover, June 2013.  
[https://www.bildungsketten.de/\\_media/Bericht\\_Endfassung\\_13\\_07\\_01.pdf](https://www.bildungsketten.de/_media/Bericht_Endfassung_13_07_01.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.esf.de/portal/DE/Foerderperiode-2014-2020/ESF-Programme/bmas/2014-11-19-abbau-Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit.html>

able to work but have been without work since at least two years, at least 35 years old and who do not have any formal VET qualification. The eligible target group was extended in February 2016 due to low participation: Participation is now open to eligible LTU, even if their long-term unemployment has been interrupted by:

- (e) a sick leave or treatment of more than six weeks
- (a) period of care for a dependent relative in need of care
- (b) period of parental leave for children under 3 years
- (c) short employment of maximum 70 working days per year
- (d) a marginal part-time job, a so-called “mini-job” with maximum € 450 per month and less than 15 hours per week
- (e) a successful upskilling measure with the programme FbW (refer to chapter 2) of maximum 8 weeks
- (f) an authorized absence of more than 21 calendar days in 12 months.

A more intensive version of the programme addresses LTU with multiple placement obstacles who have been unemployed for at least five years.

### **3.2.3. Description of activities <sup>(43)</sup>**

The Jobcenter acts as service provider towards the participating LTU and employers, with its holistic and experienced guidance through the whole programme cycle.

**Assessment and profiling:** Qualifications, skills, work experiences and preferences are directly assessed as part of the standard registration and guidance process for the unemployed at the employment agency. Within this programme, the Jobcenter special team (recruiter and coach, see below) assesses the individual competences and potentials of participants in the placement phase, later again together with the employer to accompany with the necessary upskilling measures and later again, for the contract extension or a new application phase.

**Contacting:** Participants in the ESF programme are registered LTU who fulfil the target group profile described above and are willing to participate.

**Advocating/Recruiting:** Most companies have major reservations about employing a LTU and need to be persuaded. In a placement survey from 2011 to 2015, the Institute for Employment Research (IAB) found out that 42% of companies took into account applications of LTU when recruiting. Therefore,

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<sup>43</sup> Knoop, Verena Andrea (2016): ESF-Programm für Langzeitarbeitslose im Praxisbericht. Jobcenter leistet umfassende Hilfestellung zur Rückkehr in Beschäftigung. IAB-Forum 1/2016, S. 62-69.

special teams in the Jobcenters (*Betriebsakquisiteure*) contact employers directly to recruit them for the programme. The “employer recruiters” also build a pool of applicants with the LTU participating in the programme, to be placed in the recruited companies. The recruiters provide advice and guidance to the employers when hiring individuals in the the programme pool of LTU.

The LTU are to be employed for at least 20 hours per week and for at least 24 months. Big firms tend to offer shorter contracts and many do not fulfil the programme requirements but regional SMEs proved to be more flexible.

**Financial incentive:** The Jobcenters provide substantial financial compensation in the form of wage subsidies to the employer for the reduced output of the employed LTU. The subsidies are paid up to 18 months and are degressive in time:

- (a) during the first 6 months: 75% of the wages are covered by the Jobcenter
- (b) the following 9 months: 50 % of the wages are subsidised
- (c) the next 3 months. 25% of the wages are subsidised
- (d) the following 6 months: obligation of post-employment

The more intensive version of the programme addressing LTU who have been unemployed for at least five years offers a higher financial compensation to employers during 24 to 36 months: first year, 75% wage subsidies; second year, 65% and third year, 50% wage subsidies, without obligation of post-employment.

**Caseload management and guidance:** holistic and experienced individual coaching and mentoring of LTU through the whole programme (with maximum caseload of 10 to 15 per coach):

- (a) at first, employer recruiter and coach draw an individual development and coaching plan for the participant based on skills assessment and needs, which they later discuss with the participant and the employer. If upskilling measures are necessary, they are added to the plan. The development plan is continuously updated in the course of the programme.
- (b) intensive coaching during the whole job application process for the programme placement, and also at mid-term, for the contract extension or renewal beyond the programme
- (c) social activation before and once in employment: getting on time at work, preparation to meet the expectations of the employer, help to have good relations with colleagues
- (d) help in acquiring key competences indispensable in daily work, e.g. social competences (steady motivation, self-confidence, ability to work in a team, empathic capacity), methodical competences (IT skills, writing business letters)

- (e) interface between LTU and employer, Jobcenter and other administrations as well as counselling of all key partners in the work relationship for employment stability
- (f) help develop a daily structure over a longer time period
- (g) assistance by administrative formalities (e.g. applications, claims)
- (h) support in everyday life, e.g. use of public transportation, dealing with money matters, visual appearance, shopping
- (i) financial support for commuting costs of the participant
- (j) towards the end of the contract, if an extension could not be reached, the coach helps to start a new job search and application process putting forward all new acquired skills and competences during the 2-year work practice, enabling new perspectives for the former LTU.

**Upskilling measures:** Depending on case profiling and the demands of the employer for the job, necessary upskilling measures can be provided and funded parallel to employment: funding is available for job-related vocational qualification or basic skills qualification (reading, writing, calculating, IT skills) by a recognized provider.

The Jobcenter decides on funding qualifying measures upon the recommendation of the employer, the participant (employed LTU), the coach and the recruiter.

#### **3.2.4. Staff and qualification**

The coaches should have a qualification at least equivalent to a bachelor degree (at least DQR level 6) and at least two years of work practice, particularly work with unemployed, cooperation with employers and experience in socio-educational individual coaching, including mentoring in basic skills.

The recruiters should have work practice in sales and marketing, particularly in contacting employers and in placement acquisition, with in-depth knowledge of the regional labour market and operative staff management.

#### **3.2.5. Management and financing**

The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the European Social Fund (ESF) are financing the programme with a total budget of € 762 million.

The programme runs from 1 May 2015 to 31 July 2020. It aims at funding 337 projects (mostly Jobcenters) with 33,000 participating LTU.

Approx. 15,000 LTU were participating in the programme from May 2015 to December 2016.

The first funding regulation by the BMAS was already adapted twice <sup>(44)</sup> (in February 2016 and February 2017) in order to reach its goals more successfully and implement the programme more effectively. The updating was based on the interim implementation report and on feedback and impulses given at two workshops <sup>(45)</sup> with practitioners.

### **3.2.6. Evaluation**

The programme is being evaluated <sup>(46)</sup> by the ISG Institut für Sozialforschung und Gesellschaftspolitik GmbH with two cooperation partners (Institut für Angewandte Wirtschaftsforschung e.V. and SOKO-Institut GmbH) from September 2015 until September 2021.

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<sup>44</sup> <http://www.esf.de/portal/DE/Foerderperiode-2014-2020/ESF-Programme/bmas/2014-11-19-abbau-Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit.html>

[http://www.bva.bund.de/DE/Organisation/Abteilungen/Abteilung\\_ZMV/Zuwendung\\_Themen/Themenbereich\\_Arbeit\\_Soziales/Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit/Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit\\_node.html](http://www.bva.bund.de/DE/Organisation/Abteilungen/Abteilung_ZMV/Zuwendung_Themen/Themenbereich_Arbeit_Soziales/Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit/Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit_node.html)

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.esf.de/portal/SharedDocs/Meldungen/DE/2016/2016-03-07-workshop-lza.html>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.isg-institut.de/evaluation-des-esf-bundesprogramms-zur-eingliederung-langzeitarbeitsloser-leistungsberechtigter-nach-dem-sgb-ii-auf-dem-allgemeinen-arbeitsmarkt/>

## CHAPTER 4.

# Conclusion

The target groups NEET (or rather the group of „not formally qualified – nfQ“ in Germany) and LTU are clearly linked since the highest risk factor to become long-term unemployed is low or no formal qualification. Therefore, the individual coaching components of the Educational Chains initiative address young people at risk of dropping out of school from Grade 7 until they have acquired a formal vocational qualification. National standard CVET programmes offer the possibility to acquire a formal vocational qualification as an adult. However, for those who have been unemployed for many years, priority is given to social activation and the reintegration in the labour market through an intensive coaching and active labour market policy (ALMP) measures. Then, in a second step, upskilling measures adapted to the individual situation of reintegration in employment are offered.



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