

***Evaluation arbeitsmarktpolitischer Maßnahmen für Jugendliche in  
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***Englische Kurzfassung***

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# Evaluation of Labour-Market Policy Measures for Young Persons in Vienna

## Final Report Summary

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The aim of this research was to scientifically examine seven Viennese projects aimed at supporting the integration of young people into the employment market. The projects in question were c'mon 14, m.o.v.e. on, spacelab, c'mon 17, Jugendwerkstatt, Jugend College, and Meine Chance 2010.

### **Heterogeneous target groups, aims and diverse needs for support**

The projects were designed for different age groups from 14 to 25 years old and differed from one another in terms of content and focus. They offered various avenues of approach at various levels of access and their duration varied from four and a half months up to four years.

### **Data basis and stages of research**

The following data and documents were included in the investigation:

- Anonymous information about the initial situation and the progress during the project participation.
- Information was also made available through the “Datawarehouse” of the Public Employment Service of Austria (AMS). This data concerned all participants who had at the very least been registered for short periods as being out of work or were seeking an apprenticeship. On the basis of this data an evaluation was carried out in order to gain an insight into the employment market long term concerns of the participants.
- Statements from the participants including those who dropped out were obtained from surveys conducted for the most part online.
- Statements from the network partners were obtained by carrying out partly qualitative and partly online network analyses.
- Data concerning costs which were made available by the responsible organisations concerned. These were the Public Employment Service of Vienna (AMS) and the Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (waff).

## **1. The project implementation from the viewpoint of the responsible bodies**

During the first quarter of 2011, 18 interviews were conducted with 33 persons. The selected people were members of the participating youth projects, representatives from the sponsoring Public Employment Service of Austria (AMS) and the Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (waff) as well as those involved with schools. The questions posed concerned the expectations of the project, an evaluation of the implementation process so far, and the factors and conditions necessary for success. The set objective of the organisations involved was to derive methods with which to combat youth unemployment in Vienna. It was also considered important to consider to what extent the projects could contribute to the broadening of previous measures of assistance and how efficient and effective were they for young people seeking employment. Apart from the question of funding, the management of the entire range of offers to the youth of Vienna was considered to be of major importance. Another challenge is the identification of the target groups and the necessary means of support.

## **2. Working in the network: aims and practice of cooperation work**

In the first quarter of 2011, a network analysis was carried out using a partly standardised web-based questionnaire. The content was designed to illustrate the networking situation of the project with the relevant institutions and the structural organisation of offers, as well as to discover both the beneficial and the negative factors affecting the network. The participants in this task were representatives of the youth projects, the coordination office for youth educational activities, AMS, waff and school organisations.

Apart from the Youth Department of the Public Employment Service in Vienna which is the principal body responsible for youth employment, the other central cooperation partners in the project were waff, school organisations, various departments of the city council and institutions from private industry. The most important elements of the cooperation were the participant-specific tasks, network activities and project planning. There were four concrete demands with regard to the structure of the network and offers of assistance. These were ensuring a coordinated procedure between the service provider and the clientele, optimising the cooperation between the responsible organisations and those working in the projects, providing adequate information about the activities of all of the youth projects and improving the availability of data about assisting young people. The optimisation proposals for the support system for young people were comprised of several components. For example, early intervention should be increased and measures should be taken to improve the school structures. In the future, it is hoped that the work of the projects will be more strongly acknowledged and recognised and that the networking activities will be intensified at several levels.

## **3. Analysing the need for intervention and the effectiveness of measures**

During the period of March to December 2011, information about the participants attending the seven courses under investigation which highlighted the need for intervention could be incorporated for the purposes of this study. This information concerned also the results of the interventions for the participants and their degree of success. In total, 1,990 attendances (69% of 2,872 attendances) could be included in the investigation.

882 attendances of c'mon 14, spacelab, and c'mon 17 were concerned with demands of short term offers of the projects, for which only a few selected social demographic personal characteristics and details could be gathered from short consultations.

Information on five of the courses (spacelab, c,mon17, Jugendwerkstatt, Jugend College and Meine Chance) from the Datawarehouse of AMS could be examined in order to assess the success of the measures.

Apart from the specific project analyses of the results, an analysis on the requirement of intervention could be carried out on some more comprehensive measures. On the basis of the results of the analyses, the offered measures could be compared to the investigated intervention-need groups.

## Heterogeneous intervention needs and variable intensity

In a cluster analysis in which 883 attendances were included, the following intervention need clusters were identified:

- Cluster 1: Singular intervention need (22%): The intervention requirement of this group is mostly concentrated on overcoming one special integration barrier. With the assistance of focused support to overcome the dominant obstacle and providing suitable educational possibilities, there are good chances that the persons concerned can be (re)integrated into education or into the employment market.
- Cluster 2: Differentiated intervention need in two areas (35%): This group has on average two main obstacles to overcome. Frequently, a systematic examination into career choice and/or cultural skills as well as well-directed support in one or two other fields is necessary.
- Cluster 3: Diffused intervention need with the emphasis on empowerment (14%): In addition to challenges in other fields, such as the requirements for looking into career choice and improving cultural skills, a significant increase in the self-confidence for a member of this group represents a conspicuous and very important need for intervention.
- Cluster 4: Case management intervention need (16%): This group consists of persons with wider intervention requirements. Apart from intensive assistance in career choice and improving cultural skills, access to education and the employment market are also important reasons for intervention.
- Cluster 5: Case management intervention need with targeted support for social skills (13%): This group has the most intensive support needs. Apart from the need for case management to offer help in dealing with several problems and assisting clients in choosing a career and developing cultural skills, these young people require specific support in improving their social skills and dealing with authority.

Overall, it is to be seen, that the intervention needs vary more in terms of intensity than in their subject matter. As the needs for improving cultural skills and supporting young people in career orientation appear in four of the five cluster groups, it is clear that these two intervention requirements are of special value. It is for this reason that a combination of cultural skills and career choice should be offered as a “standard packet” for young people who are at risk of being excluded from the job market.

## Comparing the need for intervention and the measures on offer

The project concepts of the seven evaluated measures were compared to the needs for intervention. The results are portrayed in the following table:

**Table 1: Summary of the relevant intervention offers determined on the basis of cluster analysis and their correspondence in the project concepts respectively in the realised intervention offers within the measures under investigation**

	c`mon 14	m.o.v.e. on	spacelab	c`mon 17	Jugend- werkstatt	Jugend College	Meine Chance – secondary school final exam	Meine Chance
Prevailing conditions	Developing robust relationships based on trust <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	Low-threshold <sup>2</sup> work experience			✓				
Reaching people with singular Intervention requirements	Focused support for individual problems <sup>3</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	If requested by the participant	
Standard packet	Working on cultural skills <sup>4</sup>	to a small extent	to a small extent	✓	partly	✓	✓	
	Clarification of career conception	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Offers, from which suitable forms of intervention can be chosen	Working on soft skills <sup>5</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Working on work behaviour <sup>6</sup>			✓		✓		
	Improving self-confidence <sup>7</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Special offers to young people with multiple problems - choice of a suitable combination on the basis of the individual situation	Focused support on multiple problems	✓	✓	✓	✓			

<sup>1</sup> In order to ensure a good working relationship based on trust, it is essential that there is always a responsible and qualified case manager or advisor available to give the required support.

<sup>2</sup> Low-threshold work experience means that the participant is able to work now and again in the workshop on a daily basis in order that he or she becomes accustomed to regular activity. The next step is for the person to work on a weekly basis. The participant also has the possibility to change, if necessary, back to day training.

<sup>3</sup> It was assumed, that this level is ensured if in the measure concept there is access to a responsible and qualified case manager, who is able to take into consideration an individual's initial situation and offer concret support for a multitude of problems. Jugend College has proved to be a success in this regard, because in the course reports were evaluated individually.

<sup>4</sup> It was assumed, that this level is ensured if in the measure concept or in the documented intervention offers the supporting measures in cultural techniques were foreseen and have been realised.

<sup>5</sup> It was assumed, that this level is ensured if in the measure concept or in the documented intervention offers the supporting measures in soft skills were foreseen and have been realised.

<sup>6</sup> It was assumed, that this level is ensured if in the measure concept practical work experience was foreseen.

<sup>7</sup> It was assumed, that this level is ensured if in the measure concept or in the documented intervention offers in order to increase motivation and empowerment were foreseen.

### **spacelab offers the widest scope for covering differing needs for intervention**

An examination of table 1 reveals that spacelab has the broadest range of possible offers in dealing with young people in danger of being socially excluded. This project offers individualised counselling, targeted assistance and support in developing cultural skills and soft skills and concrete, short term and easily accessible employment possibilities. The results point out that the measures succeed in reaching out to young people and support them with measures which are needed and accepted by them.

### **m.o.v.e on, c'mon 14, c'mon 17 - possible improvement in cultural skills**

The range of measures offered in m.o.v.e on, c'mon 14 and c'mon17 is also wide, although somewhat lacking with regard to easily accessible employment. These measures were very suitable for youths with various intervention requirements, as long as they managed to do without options for accessible employment. The offer of developing cultural skills seemed to be used too little and also possibly not offered intensively enough.

### **Jugend College offers very focused support**

The measures offered by Jugend College were concentrated on young people with specific intervention needs. The results illustrate that the focused support given to young people with specialised needs was successful.

### **Jugendwerkstatt, Meine Chance – it is unclear, if the offers correspond to target group needs**

The Jugendwerkstatt project seems especially suitable for young people, whose needs for intervention are concentrated on choosing an occupation, writing job applications, motivation and improving self-confidence. However, should a young person require more personal attention, it is suspected that the support offered would be somewhat inadequate. A helpful relationship with an advisor would appear to be a feasible way in which to increase the achievements of the target group and the success of the measures. Much the same can be said of the Meine Chance project, which is very difficult to categorize because of the differing target groups and the project types.

## **4. The courses from the perspective of the participants**

The consultations with the clients were carried out using questionnaires, which were completed by over a hundred persons per project. The subject matter concerned the reasons why the young people had chosen to take part, their degree of satisfaction, and whether or not their vision of the future had changed since participating in the project. They were also asked to give possible proposals for improvement to the course. The most important given reasons for their attendance were support in looking for a job or suitable further education, assistance in applying for employment and obtaining information. The results showed a high degree of satisfaction with the project. From time to time, it was also apparent that the outlook from the perspective of the clients had significantly improved. This included an increase in self confidence, perceiving the prospect of a job or further education and finding the motivation to plan a career or an education. 20% of the clients provided project-specific proposals for improving courses.

## **Courses seen as a “temporary solution” – a frequent reason for dropping out**

In total 82 persons who dropped out of five of the seven projects in the investigation were questioned. There were no dropouts in the m.o.v.e on and c'mon 14 projects. Many of the people who dropped out stated that their reasons for leaving the project had nothing to do with whether or not the course had met up to their expectations. For example, some stated that their participation was only to be on a temporary basis anyway before changing to another course or beginning a course of further education or study. Other reasons given were related to family or health concerns. Another very important ground for leaving was that a job had been found. When one compares the degree of satisfaction and other indicators between those who completed the course with those who dropped out, it was evident that for the most part a similar positive picture emerged. Two-thirds of the dropouts questioned were assessed as “not successful” after ending their participation.

## **5. The meaning of diversity**

In a focus group with project representatives, the question was posed as to what extent should diversity be regarded as “express high esteem and respect for variety” for the everyday work purposes of the project. In other words, how important are specific factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, skin colour, disabilities, sexual orientation, religion and values for the daily activities of the project? To a certain extent, the implementation of gender and diversity aspects was brought about by putting together multidiscipline teams, using knowledge workshops on themes such as cultural background, ethnicity or religion and by allowing clients to freely select their own counselor. The introduction of beneficial factors of the gender mainstreaming and diversity approach were facilitated by assembling multicultural teams, small mixed groups of persons with different and diverse backgrounds and ensuring that there was a balanced participation of men and women as well as networking with other interested parties.

## **6. Cost benefit analysis**

As the available data for this work was somewhat rudimentary, it was only possible to highlight a few cost benefit aspects in the initial stages. A comparison analysis of the projects can only be looked upon as meaningful to a limited extent because of the great heterogeneity with regard to the target groups, objectives, access, style, conception and the duration of the courses which included variable modules. An analysis of the fiscal cost-effectiveness or the reduced resulting costs of unemployment would require detailed data about the individual costs, the individual participants, the absolved measures, success and the follow-up status.

For methodological and data availability reasons a cost-effectiveness analysis was concentrated on key aspects of costs. As one major conclusion this resulted in a typification by form of assistance.

