



Arbeitsmarktservice
Oberösterreich

Evaluation ‚Berufsausbildungsassistenz‘ in Upper Austria (Abstract)

Project management AMS:
Mag.^a Eva Fischlmayr

Project management IBE:
Mag.^a Martina Stadlmayr



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Abstract

The *Integrative Berufsausbildung (IBA)* (integrative apprenticeship) was established with the since September 2003 passed amendment of *Berufsausbildungsgesetz* (§ 8b BAG) (vocational education law). The aim of this law is to improve the integration of disadvantaged young people with personal placement obstacles in the labour market.

Target group of the *Integrative Berufsausbildung* are teenagers, who could not find a regular *Lehrstelle* (dual apprenticeship) through the *Arbeitsmarktservice (AMS)* (National Employment Office) and to whom one of the following preconditions applies (§ 8b para. 4 BAG):

1. teenagers, who needed *sonderpädagogischen Förderbedarf (SPF)* (special pedagogic aid) in higher compulsory school (*Zi 1*)
2. teenagers without or with a negative degree of *Hauptschule* (higher compulsory school – ISCED-Level 2) (*Zi 2*)
3. teenagers with disabilities according to the *Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz* or the *Landesbehindertengesetz* (job placement laws concerning people with disabilities on a national and federal level) (*Zi 3*)
4. teenagers, who can not find (foreseeable) a *Lehrstelle* because of reasons which are within the person concerned (*Zi 4*)

According to the regulations of the *Berufsausbildungsgesetz (BAG)*, it is possible to pass an extended apprenticeship period (§ 8b para. 1) or part-qualification apprenticeship (§ 8b para. 2). An extended *Lehre* (apprenticeship) makes sense, if it can be assumed that the person concerned maybe needs a bit longer to graduate, but is in principle able to. A part-qualification apprenticeship on the other hand is suggestive, if it is foreseeable that the person concerned will not be able to graduate even with a longer period of training, but will manage to acquire parts of one or more vocational training degrees. Therefore are in the system of *Integrative Berufsausbildung* two possibilities of apprenticeships provided:

- The first variation provides a *Lehrvertrag* (apprenticeship contract) with all components of an occupation and an extended apprenticeship period (extension of 1 year respectively 2 years in special cases, if it is necessary to achieve the graduation). This extension can be arranged at the beginning of a *Lehre* or during the training period.
- The second variation is a vocational education for part-qualifications of an occupation (duration 1 to 3 years). The training is reduced to certain parts of an occupation and can be supplemented through skills and know-how from other occupations.

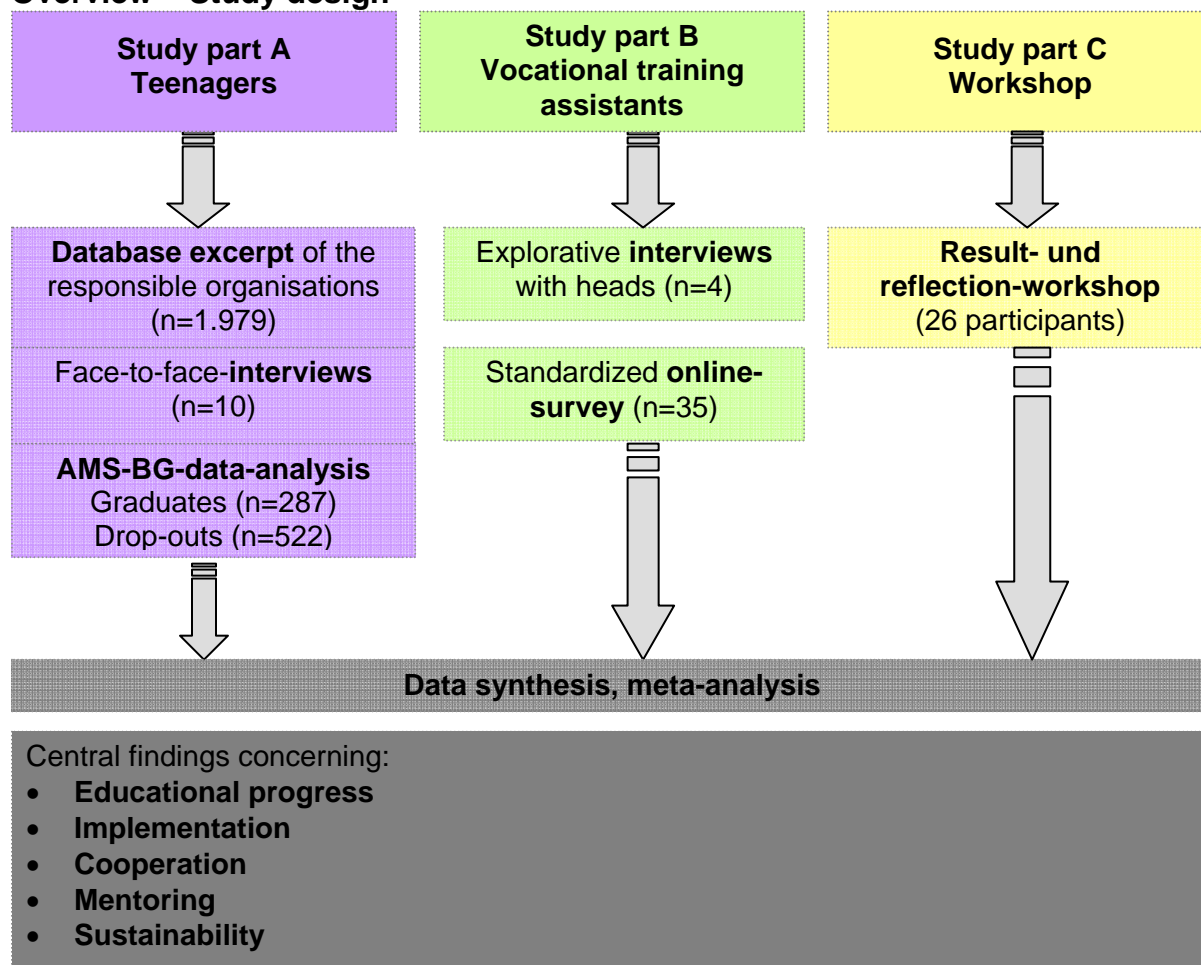
The education/ training is carried out in a dual way, that means, on the one hand working in companies or job training institutions and on the other hand vocational school attendance. Major element of the *IBA* is the monitoring through the *Berufsausbildungs-assistenz (BAS)* (vocational training assistant), who accompanies and supports the client for the whole period of the vocational training.

The aim is a successful graduation and to be as *BAS* a contact- and coordination point for all people and organisations concerned (legal guardians, companies and job

training institutions, vocational schools, federal education authority, sponsors (*AMS*¹, *Bundessozialamt (BSB)*², *Land OÖ*³).

This evaluation aimed to x-ray the *Berufsausbildungsassistenz (BAS)* in Upper Austria through a multi-perspective design, as well as to analyze the two major actors of the BAS, the teenagers and the vocational training assistants, extensively. The study design follows therefore a combination of qualitative methods and quantitative investigations.

Overview – Study design



The situation of the teenagers/clients is on the one hand described through a quantitative analysis of the database of the responsible organisations concerning special attributes of all up to now served clients. On the other hand the occupational statistical data of all graduates and drop-outs was compared, as well as 10 teenagers, shortly before or after graduation were interviewed (face-to-face).

The view of the vocational training assistants was in a first step explored through 4 personal interviews with the heads of the respective responsible organisations for the BAS. Afterwards a part-standardized online-survey was developed, which was presented to all in Upper Austria working vocational training assistants.

¹ Arbeitsmarktservice (Federal Employment Office)

² Social welfare office

³ Federal State Upper Austria

To integrate the perspective of all actors involved, a result-workshop with representatives of the payers, responsible organisations, companies and job training institutions, federal education authority, the vocational schools, *Wirtschaftskammer* (Federal Economic Chamber) and *Arbeiterkammer* (Federal Chamber of Labour) was arranged.

Since the implementation of the IBA in spring 2003, more than 2.000 Upper Austrian teenagers have been served through the vocational training assistance. Therefore the organisations *Jugend am Werk GmbH* (from 2003 up to now) in charge of the *AMS* and the *Bundessozialamt (BSB)*, *Ibis Acam* (from 2004 to 2005) and *Hilfswerk* (from 2005 up to now) both in charge of the *Land OÖ* were enthroned.

Since the existence of this measure (till due day July 31, 2008) have 1.606 teenagers been served through *Jugend am Werk GmbH* (847 for the *AMS*, 759 for the *Bundessozialamt*), as well as 373 teenager through *Hilfswerk Linz Süd* and around 50 through *Ibis Acam*. Due to changes/ handovers of clients between the responsible organisations, some cases are recorded several times. These cases were only counted one time and were assigned to the organisation where the *BAS* was taken in account the last time.

Along the lines of the national trend, an overbalance concerning young men (65.6%) can be reported. The average age of the served teenagers is 18.6 years and 40.9% of the *IBA-Lehrlinge* have a graduation of a *Sonderschule*⁴ or a negative compulsory school degree. Are the different legal target groups according to § 8b compared, it appears that teenagers, who can not find a *Lehrestelle* because of reasons which are within the person concerned (*Zi 4*) are overrepresented.

At end of July 2008 were 1.070 teenagers served through the *Berufsausbildungsassistenz* (“current” persons, who did not break up, nor graduated): 839 through *Jugend am Werk GmbH* (310 for the *AMS*, 529 for *BSB*), 229 through *Hilfswerk Linz Süd* and 2 teenagers (“oddments” from the years 2004/05) through *Ibis Acam* both in charge of *Land OÖ*.

To due day July 31, 2008 graduated 224 teenagers (11.3%; n=1.979) and 522 (26.4%; n=1979) broke off, but are partly intensively post-served. Regarding the changing behaviour (changeover form on company to another or changes concerning the form of the apprenticeship contract) it turns out that changes have a positive impact on the graduation probability.

On the basis of the employment data of the measure-graduates, following findings can be reported: The completion of the IBA-measure reduces the risk of belonging to the occupational group of “unskilled workers/ cleaners” by a minimum of three times.

The employment rate within 3 months after the measure reaches 69% among the graduates and only 38% among the drop-outs. In series the employment rate declines within 2 years after the measure to 54% among the graduates and rises to 49% among the drop-outs.

⁴ School for handicapped children

Also concerning cross-social interests, positive effects of a completed IBA can be identified: Analysis of the assessment basis (a measured value of personal income) show that graduates provide considerable higher social insurance contributions than drop-outs: While the average monthly gross salary of the graduates within the 2 years of observation period does not fall below 700 Euros, this value counts among the drop-outs at maximum 409 Euros.

The process of mentoring through the vocational training assistance starts formally with the beginning of an apprenticeship and ends with a graduation or a drop-out. The duration of the mentoring strongly varies and accounts according to the databases of the organisations concerned between 4 days and 4 years. The mean of the mentoring duration from the entrance to the pullout is 493 days, no matter of graduation or drop-out. Are only the 224 graduates taken into account, the average mentoring duration is rising up to 854 days.

Before the beginning of the IBA-measure the payers check formal criteria to decide if an entrance into the IBA is possible. In case of the payer *Bundessozialamt* a so called *Clearing* with the adolescents is arranged before the start of the *IBA*. But also the other organisations concerned do have a period of clarification before the decision concerning the entrance into the *Integrative Berufsausbildung* is made. The subsequent key process of the *BAS* can be split into the following phases⁵:

At the initial stage primarily administrative tasks assault, for example the determination of apprenticeship contracts, the support of companies concerning request for financial aid and the registration for vocational school. Parallel to that are companies sensibilized - a task which should not be underestimated – to establish the necessary infrastructure for the clients.

During the apprenticeship are the meditative competences of the vocational training assistant in the front. The working fields are supporting actions and intervening at crisis and communication problems. Concerning teenagers in job training institutions is the working load not as that laborious, because the task of sensitization and intervention at crisis is carried by the social education workers on the spot. Also a continuous contact with the parents of the clients is maintained.

During the period of vocational school attendance the *BAS* supports their teenagers primarily through organizational tasks – for instance, if private lessons/ coaching must be arranged. Further more, they are designing the modality of the final exam in case of part-qualification.

Resulting from the reflections of the vocational training assistants (Online-survey) and of the participants of the workshop 4 central spheres of activity regarding improvements of the *BAS* respectively *IBA* can be identified:

1. Control of quality and effort
2. Public relations
3. Vocational schools
4. Quality of results

Up to now, organisational overlapping and uniform definition of quality and effort is missing in Upper Austria, as well as control referring to this. Many stakeholders

⁵ BMWA (2006): Integrative Berufsausbildung. Evaluierung von § 8b des Berufsausbildungsgesetzes. Endbericht der KMU Forschung Austria in Zusammenarbeit mit ibw, Wien, S. 2, 36ff.

describe that according to the organisation concerned different benchmarks of effort are taken into account, which is reflected in the quality of effort as well as in needed input of the stakeholders. Is the effort too strongly orientated at the (restricted) resources, also precarious labour conditions emerge, which has a negative impact on the continuity of mentoring.

A possible proposal is to define standards concerning effort, quality, as well as personal resources (key of mentoring, kind of employment status). A commitment to quality orientated service delivery and the analogous interlinking of quality criteria concerning the allocation turned out. This accompanies with an extension of the allocation period. Furthermore evaluations and cross-organisational dialog, for example through meetings of supervision teams, would serve the development of quality.

Field of action: Quality

Control of quality and effort	
Current situation	Problem situation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisations concerned work independently from each other and only in adjustment to the particular payer - Standards of effort and quality are not provided and only shaped through the resources - IBA has project status (runtime is limited to one year) - Demands concerning education level of the BAS incumbent on the single organisation concerned – different stuffing policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depending on the organisation-allocation do the clients get different efforts concerning quality - Companies and job training institutions are unsatisfied with the different quality levels of the organisations concerned - Creation of precarious employment contracts (from limited in time to honorary) - Difficulties to find well qualified staff - Particular education and precognitions of the BAS can strongly vary
Approaches/ fields of action	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Uniform standards of effort and quality in allocation ⇒ Longer runtime of the IBA (min. 4 years) or fixed establishment in one organisation ⇒ Standards concerning the key of mentoring ⇒ Regular evaluations and controls of quality ⇒ Annual meetings of an introduced steering board ⇒ Standards concerning of staff recruitment 	

The *Integrative Berufsausbildung* is till today a kind of “insider-project” and the general public does have barely information about the possibilities and chances of this measure.

Additionally, the *Lehre* in general lost in the last years its positive image and people, who match to the defined target groups of the *IBA* (people with special pedagogy aid, negative compulsory school degree, disabilities, other reasons within the person) count to the stigmatized groups of society.

It seems necessary to start a broad sensitization as well as to approach relevant stakeholders of a (possible) *IBA*. These are companies, parents, young people and especially teachers of compulsory school, because they would be able to recognize

possible *IBA-Lehrlinge* and to call attention to the *IBA*. In some *Hauptschulen*⁶, this code of practise is already established and works out well, but there is not structural anchorage of an information-transfer like this.

Field of action: Public relations

Public Relations	
Current situation	Problem situation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public relations is barely carried out - Only certain part-systems (f.e.: <i>AMS</i>-consultancy, social youth projects and measures) are well informed - Few people are in the know of the <i>IBA</i> itself and the problems and needs of the <i>IBA-Lehrlinge</i> - Lacking of social value concerning the <i>Lehre</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough actors (employers, teachers, teenagers, parents aso.) get information - Too small (in real times) palette of occupations - Stigmatization, exclusion, discrimination - Jealousy of other <i>Lehrlinge</i> in vocational school - Bad image of the <i>Lehre</i>
Approaches/ fields of action	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Making the <i>Integrative Berufsausbildung</i> public, especially in higher compulsory schools and companies; accosting young people and parents ⇒ Sensitization concerning the theme, across society, as well as the actors of the <i>IBA</i> ⇒ Approaching companies and branches of trade intentionally to broaden the palette of occupations ⇒ Boosting the image of the <i>Lehre</i> through targeted initiatives 	

The gateway vocational school and *Berufsausbildungsassistenz* is on the one hand suffering from the limited possibilities through the available resources and the incompatibility of the usual vocational school systems and the *IBA-Lehre*. On the other hand are organizational tasks occasionally difficult, because through the individual mentoring - every *IBA-Lehrling* has its own *BAS* - a lot of different contact persons must be take into account.

The major demand concerning improvements and easement of work with the vocational schools is to add on resources as well as to institutionalize the information flows between *Berufsausbildungsassistenz* and vocational schools.

⁶ Higher Compulsory School – ISCED-Level 2

Field of action: Vocational schools

Vocational schools	
Current situation	Problem situation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvements concerning the cooperation between <i>BAS</i> and vocational schools, despite of numerous advances since 2003 - Vocational schools feel abandoned by the lawgiver - Teachers feel partly overstrained (not enough time and special education) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information flow respectively reachability is often not given - Lack of information (case history) concerning the teenagers - Legal framework concerning the <i>IBA</i> in vocational schools is missing - No additive resource, despite a growing number of <i>IBA-Lehrlinge</i> in vocational schools - Teachers rarely have an education/ experience in the field of “teenagers with the need of special education” - Difficulties in dealing with persons suffering psychological disorders
Approaches/ fields of action	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Anchoring of a legal framework concerning the <i>IBA</i> in the vocational school system ⇒ Funding of more resources, also for professionals ⇒ Establishment of an uniform vocational school system would lighten the work of the <i>BAS</i> ⇒ Institutionalization of the information flow (f.e.: regular team conferences) ⇒ Stronger cross linking of measures (f.e.: measure-portfolio for teenagers) ⇒ More (re-)trainings in the field of spezial education 	

The result quality of the work of the *Berufsausbildungsassistenz* is good. The *IBA* is described as a story of success, which is fulfilling their goal – given disadvantaged teenagers the chance to make an ISCED-Level-3-degree - at best. Nevertheless it must be noted that some young people can not find their way to the efforts of the *IBA* under the current circumstances, which would be desirable. So, regular *Lehrlinge* could in difficult times of their life be temporarily accompanied through the *BAS*.

In total the rigidity of the system is criticised, as well as the changes within the forms of the *IBA*. Especially the change from the regular *Lehre* to the *IBA* and vice versa is at the moment very laborious. Another problem is seen in the fact, that there are barley any resources concerning the consultation of experts, for example teenagers with psychological disorders.



Field of action: Results

Quality of results	
Current situation	Problem situation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>BAS</i> can only care for teenagers, who fit accurately to the target group definition - The possibility to change the form of apprenticeship is seen as essential factor of success - Flexibility of <i>BAS-system</i> versus inflexibility of the vocational school system - Barley any options of action in case of job loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certain target groups are recognized too late or are overlooked - Drop-outs of regular <i>Lehrlinge</i> because of missing support respectively missing possibility of intervention on the part of the <i>BAS</i> - Changes of form of apprenticeship are often difficult to realize - Curriculums for part-qualification are often difficult to realize - Missing resources concerning „problem cases“ - Job loss because of an insolvency means drop-out and the loss of the efforts of the <i>IBA</i>
Approaches/ Fields of action	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ <i>BAS</i> as a general drop-in center for <i>Lehrlinge</i>, who are threatened by a drop-out or do have difficulties in the apprenticeship ⇒ Transition to a flexible system to allow changes in all directions (regular <i>Lehre</i> ⇔ <i>IBA</i>, part-qualification aso.) ⇒ Development of sensible instruments of diagnosis, which could already be applied in compulsory school ⇒ Modular curriculums ⇒ Alternative forms of assessment ⇒ In case of job loss a legal guarantee of a transfer to a job training institution ⇒ Expansion of the possibilities concerning funding to ensure quality and deal adequately with special cases 	

The proposals concerning the transition to a higher level of flexibility in the systems of the *IBA* contain the legal easement of changes, which goes along with the expansion of the possibilities concerning financing the projects, as well as modular curriculums and alternative assessment forms in vocational schools are needed and sensible instruments of diagnosis, which could alleviate the change-over from compulsory school to vocational school.

Furthermore, there should be a legal coverage for example in case of insolvency the *Lehrling* is able to finish its *Lehre* in job training institution.

It would also be recommendable to gain access to the know-how and the experience of the *BAS* to an extended target group and to appoint them as temporary mediators in case of imminent drop-out.