Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion

There is no strategy on social inclusion of young people only. Youth is included in the national action plans and the strategic social reporting. In January 2010, the Austrian Federal Government adopted the National Action Plan (NAP) for Integration. Within this NAP several Ministries describe their individual measures, all with different time frames.

Scope and contents


The Action Plan is the new foundation of integration policy, combining challenges, principles and objectives in the following key action fields:

- Language and Education
- Work and Employment
- Rule of Law and Values
- Health and Social Issues
- Intercultural Dialogue
- Sports and Recreation
- Living and the regional Dimension of Integration
- Language and Education

The field "Language and Education" is of particular importance, as German language skills are
understood as the basis for successful integration. German language skills are not only necessary for economic and social participation in Austria but also crucial for migrants’ integration into the labour market.

In order to facilitate accomplishments in school and later on success in work life, it is important to support children and adolescents in language learning. Good language skills will open up better education perspectives and improve job prospects. At the same time, they are of critical importance for maintaining the school system’s quality level.

The Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äußeres) has developed a 50 action points plan for integration (50 Punkte – Plan). The objective is to integrate persons entitled to asylum or subsidiary protection quickly and to enable them to make a living as soon as possible. In this context, acquisition of German language skills, joining the labour market and communication of the Austrian value system play a key role. The Ministry for Integration, the Public Employment Service Austria and the Austrian Integration Forum present Austria-wide cooperation in providing Values Courses for refugees. The brochure Co-existence in Austria has been published to facilitate getting to know Austrian values.

Additionally, a training document for the values and orientation course has been developed and is available in several languages on a website of the Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs.

There is no strategy on social inclusion of young people only. Youth is included in the national action plans and the strategic social reporting.

Scope and contents

Offers and programmes for NEET young people have to take the heterogeneity of this group into account, and the wide range of needs of this target group have to be covered by means of individual approaches. Relationship work with these young people and long-lasting reference persons are probably the most important factors for success. For this to succeed, the personnel providing support and advice need to be suitably qualified and fit naturally into their roles. For a part of these young people, alternative forms of learning, particularly in combination with practical activities, can represent an attractive way of remaining in the education/training system or returning to it. One-stop shop solutions, where young people not only receive advice and support with regard to employment and education/training opportunities, but are advised in a holistic way, are also viewed as meaningful. In order to also reach those NEET young people who have already been in a NEET situation for a longer period, are losing touch with society and have no trust in traditional institutions, it is recommended that they are actively approached by youth and social workers.

Measures to prevent early school leaving and to foster the integration of young people who are already distanced from the system are being taken, reflecting the increased awareness of the problem of NEET young people in Austria. These measures include the avoidance of early school leaving, support and information offers at the interface between school and work (youth coaching), (re-)integration measures and employment programmes.

Keeping young people in the education/training system for longer and at the same time reaching those young people who have turned away from the existing education and labour market systems are important goals of labour market policy for young people in Austria in order to significantly and sustainably improve their opportunities in the labour market.

The current government programme (Work programme of the Austrian Federal Government 2013 –
2018 thus aims to increasingly promote the social integration of young people, their education/training and their integration into the labour market.

With preventive offers against early school leaving on the one hand and diverse, low-threshold programmes for young people who are not ready to begin an apprenticeship on the other, the intention is to lead more young people towards sound vocational training (whether it is in a company or a state-run training workshop). Existing activating measures are thus being continued and extended:

- Continuation of the training guarantee: for the training year 2013-14: €173 000 000 (of which €151 000 000 is from the Public Employment Service); around 11 000 training places.
- Youth coaching: pupils in the ninth school year and NEET young people are already given advance support in dealing with problems at school by youth coaches who motivate them to continue attending school or to begin an apprenticeship. In 2013, youth coaching was implemented nationwide and in 2014 around 30,000 young people are set to benefit from this advice and support, at a cost of EUR 26m.
- Coaching for apprentices and for companies, which train apprentices: this project, which was piloted in 2012 and is now being offered throughout Austria, aims to accompany apprentices as well as the companies training them, to enable apprentices to pass their final examinations and to reduce the number of those dropping out. In 2013, 470 participants were able to benefit from coaching for apprentices. For 2014, funding for this programme again amounted to up to EUR 3m.
- Fit for training (AusbildungsFit): this is a low-threshold, standardised programme for disadvantaged young people, which is designed to integrate them into vocational training or into the labour market via individual subsidies. Nationwide coverage is planned for the medium term. In the pilot phase in 2014, over 700 young people in seven provinces (EUR 12m) will benefit from this programme.
- Production schools: here, young people can gain experience of the processes and requirements of the world of work, and can find out how working life functions. The goal of the production schools is to offer stability, increase motivation, and provide specialist knowledge and a basic qualification – all of which will ideally be put into practice via (re-) integration into the labour market, particularly in the form of taking up an apprenticeship. In 2014, around 3,000 young people in 24 production schools throughout Austria were planned to benefit from this.
- In order to improve language and reading skills among children whose first language is not German, proven measures from the field of German as a Second Language (Deutsch als Zweitsprache – DaZ) will be extended and expanded (e.g. beginners’ language groups; “Sprachstartgruppen”), also in order to address the needs of asylum seekers and people who have been granted subsidiary protection. From the funds specially earmarked for integration measures, a total of €23 750 000 million has been allocated to education. For the year 2016, an additional €40 000 000 and for 2017 an additional €80 000 000 are provided for integration measures in the Federal Budgetary Framework Law (Bundesfinanzrahmengesetz – BFRG 2017-2020). For the 2016/17 school year, the budget for compulsory schools was increased by 15% for the purchase of schoolbooks and instruction materials for German as a second language. A separate budget for the purchase of schoolbooks was established for vocational schools in 2015/16 and will be used for young refugees who are beyond the compulsory schooling age.
- Due to the influx of refugees, the challenges facing Austrian education have grown substantially at all levels. In principle, the existing instruments for the integration of children and youths whose first language is not German are well suited for promoting the integration of recognised refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection into the Austrian school system.
Austrian Stability Programm

Furthermore, social inclusion is a target of the Austrian Stability Programme [1]. The Federal Government continues its stability-oriented and sustainable fiscal and economic policy strategy. The following key policy areas were identified:

- Implementation of the tax reform 2015/2016 and reduction of non-wage labour costs
- Additional stimuli in the areas of internal and external security and measures to address the refugee inflow
- Acceleration of future-oriented investment to strengthen the growth potential of the Austrian economy, including support for the digital economy agenda, the labour market and employment creation
- Continuation of structural reforms

Responsible authority


Revisions/Updates

The rate of unemployment among people from migrant backgrounds is rising at an above-average pace, not least due to the high level of immigration to Austria. The specific problem of youths from migrant backgrounds is targeted with Austria's labour market policy is pursuing three lines of action in order to keep youths in the education or employment system:

- Vocational training (apprenticeships): Promotion of apprenticeships in businesses, AMS apprenticeship promotion, apprentice training centre programme (ÜBA) and premiums for taking on ÜBA apprentices, integrative vocational training (IBA);
- Preparation of youths for vocational training and transition management: Career orientation, youth coaching, AusbildungsFit (“Fit for Training”) programme, production schools;
- Active labour market policy for youths

The existing active labour market policy programmes offered to young people – such as the training guarantee and youth coaching - will therefore not only be continued in order to ensure the (re)integration of those who have slipped out of the system, but also continuously extended. The extension of the range of offers will ultimately lead to compulsory training for young people up to the age of 18, which is planned in the government programme. According to available estimates, this would reduce the number of NEETs in Austria by around a third.

Education until 18 [12] (AusBildung bis 18 [13])

“AusBildung bis 18” has been introduced in 2017. The latest developments of the Austrian Youth Guarantee addresses the improvement of the labour market situation for migrants, prevention and reduction of early school leaving numbers and raising the general level of education. Early school leaving as a risk factor, to advance the introduction of a formation and education up to the age of 18 (AusBildung bis 18), to close gaps, to establish adequate offers for all young people (esp. low-threshold offers) as well as to advance existing offers.