



“Evidence Based Coaching Approaches in Labour Market Policy”

Expert Workshop
Berlin, 20.06.2016

Documentation

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Expert Workshop

„Evidence Based Coaching Approaches in Labour Market Policy“

20. June 2015, Design Offices Berlin Am Zirkus, Bertolt-Brecht-Platz 3, 10117 Berlin

Moderation: Prof. Matthias Knuth

9.30– 10.00 **Arrival and registration**

10.00– 10.20 **Welcome and outlook**
Dilek Kolat, Senator for Labour, Integration and Women’s Issues,
 Berlin, Germany

10.20– 10.30 **Presentation of the agenda**
Prof Matthias Knuth, Moderation

“Setting the scene- an overview”

10.30– 11.00 **Coaching. Concepts of a counseling format**
Peter-Paul König, German Association for Coaching

Coaching Approaches in Germany

11.00– 11.30 **The Berliner Job Coaching and monitoring its success**
 Input ① *Dr Barbara Philippi* & *Dr Thomas Günther*, Senate Department for Labour,
 Integration and Women’s Issues

11.30– 12.00 **Coaching measures on a national level for persons who are far from
 the labour market- Individualised approaches in daily business and the federal
 programme ESF long-term unemployment**
 Input ② *Dr Jonathan Fahlbusch*, Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

12.00– 12.30 **Coffee break**

12.30– 13.00 **Coaching within the framework of publicly-funded employment
 in North Rhine-Westphalia**
 Input ③ *Barbara Molitor*, Ministry for Labour, Integration and Social Affairs for the State
 of North Rhine-Westphalia and *Dr Frank Bauer*, IAB North Rhine-Westphalia
 (Institute for Employment Research)

13.00– 13.30 **Group coaching in Jobcenter Offenbach – A practical example**
Input 4 *Brunhilde Link*, Pro Work – District of Offenbach – (AöR), local Jobcenter

13.30– 14.15 **Discussion of the approaches in Germany and recommendations
for further work in Berlin**
Prof Matthias Knuth, Moderation

14.15– 15.00 **Lunch**

Coaching approaches in Europe

15.00– 15.30 **Employment Shuttles based on a coaching approach –
an example from Madrid**
Input 5 *Belen García Díaz*, City of Madrid

15.30– 16.00 **Link to work – building bridges towards employment and
the registration of “soft outcomes”**
Input 6 *Jan De Mets*, City of Ghent

16.00– 16.30 **Talent Match London – Reach Out. Enable. Connect.**
Input 7 *Steph Taylor*, London Youth

16.30– 17.00 **Coffee Break**

17.00– 17.45 **Discussion of European coaching approaches and concluding discussion**
Prof Matthias Knuth, Moderation

17.45– 18.00 **Conclusion**
Boris Velter, State Secretary for Labour, Senate Department for Labour,
Integration and Women’s Issues

Background and aims

On 20 June 2016, an expert workshop was held on the subject of “Coaching approaches in job market policy and how to measure their effectiveness”. This presented various approaches aimed at integrating the (long-term) unemployed into the job market in a sustainable way. The examples included country-specific, national and European approaches, and the main focus was on how to measure and verify their effectiveness. In the main, the presenters dealt with individualised coaching approaches but some group-based ones were also included.

The need to reduce unemployment in general, but particularly among the young and long-term unemployed, remains one of the key challenges facing makers of job market and vocational training policy in Europe, Germany and Berlin. Across Europe, a high level of long-term unemployment has set in. For this reason, the EU member states have started discussing what kinds of active job market initiatives might be able to combat this effectively. Individualized approaches designed to support the unemployed are increasingly being used within this context and are replacing the idea that “one size fits all”. At a federal level, the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) launched a programme called “Opening up opportunities – Securing social participation” in 2015. One of the key aims of this is to help the long-term unemployed gain entry to the mainstream job market and encourage social participation by getting them involved in working life.

The expert workshop focused on questions such as the following: How does the Berlin job coaching scheme fit into this context? – What successes are being achieved? – What are the challenges? – What specific elements can be lifted from other coaching approaches?

Welcome and update on what is happening in Berlin



Dilek Kolat, Mayor and Senator for Labour, Integration and Women's Affairs, explained why coaching is so important to Berlin

Dilek Kolat, Mayor and Senator for Labour, Integration and Women's Affairs in Berlin, opened her welcome speech by outlining the job coaching framework with reference to the Berlin job market. She cited “Berliner Jobcoaching” as a programme that was working particularly well because it was able to get people into the job market and integrate them into it. She contrasted this with the results of federal integration programmes relating to the secondary (subsidised) job market—which she said were unsatisfactory. She emphasised the importance of researching the effectiveness of coaching so that resources could be used sensibly and efficiently, quality could be assured and improvements could be made. She explained that it was with this in mind that Berlin had spent the last four years developing and expanding a special performance measurement system for measuring the effectiveness of the “Berliner Jobcoaching” programme. She said that it was important to implement a performance measurement system right from the start so that the individual steps necessary for success could be identified and so that the effectiveness of the programme could be checked continuously. She added that the scarcity of financial resources was another reason for attaching such importance to performance measurement.

In Berlin, more than 11,000 people have participated in coaching under the “Berliner Jobcoaching” scheme. The service is offered on a completely optional basis. Therefore, not only does this figure reveal that the scheme is being very well received, but—more importantly—it demonstrates that the coachees taking part are highly motivated. The first step of the “Berliner Jobcoaching” programme for the long-term unemployed concentrates on removing barriers to employment, such as debt problems, addiction or illiteracy. The second step is to integrate them into the job market. Attempting to tackle the second step before the first would be completely unproductive. She said that further thought must be given to whether people with the least access to the job market could be offered coaching services in conjunction with positions on the subsidised job market.



According to the senator, it generally takes the long-term unemployed a long time to integrate into the mainstream job market. She said that, in this respect, the carefully targeted and individually tailored qualifications provided by the “Berliner Jobcoaching” programme also had an important role to play. These stand in stark contrast to the gigantic qualifications “factories” that are frequently encountered and which leave people even less motivated than they were to start with.

Another of Senator Kolat’s main concerns is to ensure that the successes achieved are sustainable. In her view, you cannot say that the job coaching approach has truly succeeded until the barriers have been overcome and the people have been integrated into the job market for good. The process of measuring effectiveness cannot simply stop on the day when the coachees first enter the job market. On the contrary: it must continue until the point when they are fully integrated into the job market and into their careers.

Presentation of the agenda



The host explained that the high number of long-term unemployed was decreasing only slowly and cited this as one of the reasons why diverse coaching approaches had been developed.

Professor Matthias Knuth, who was acting as host for the day, presented the agenda and began by explaining the context of job market policy in Germany (particularly for the benefit of those delegates who had come from abroad).

He said that Germany was currently experiencing a sharp increase in employment and that this was primarily benefiting the short-term unemployed, i.e. those who were not yet in- or only briefly fell into- the category covered by Book II of the German Social Security Code. He explained that, by contrast, the number of long-term unemployed had been very high for years and was decreasing only slowly. Unfortunately, this also meant that it was still very difficult for the long-term unemployed to find a job in Germany.

For the benefit of the international guests, *Professor Knuth* outlined how public employment services are structured in Germany. Firstly, there are the employment agencies that are mainly responsible for advising the short-term unemployed, placing them in work and paying their benefits. The services of the employment agencies are financed by the unemployment insurance fund. The agencies pay what is known as “unemploy-

ment benefit category I” to those who meet the eligibility requirements. Secondly, there are the job centres, which are financed by money from taxes. They look after the long-term unemployed and all those whose income is not sufficient to meet their own needs or the needs of their families. The type of benefit they distribute is called “unemployment benefit category II”, which is a form of basic social security. It is a sobering thought that seven out of every ten unemployed people receive basic social security rather than benefits funded by unemployment insurance. *Professor Knuth* also explained the difference between the existing job centre models: some job centres are run jointly by the Federal Employment Agency and a local authority (approximately a quarter of all job centres) while others are run by a rural district or an urban district (approximately a quarter of all job centres). He explained that the federal states were now starting to play an increasingly important role in job market policy because of the performance measurement function of the job centres.



Given how long-term unemployment in Germany had built up so much “inertia”, he said that attempts were being made in the country to identify routes out of it. He explained that the agencies and job centres were adopting a “regimented approach to getting people mobilised”, for example, but said that this was failing to bear fruit among the majority of the long-term unemployed because of the lack of subsequent prospects. Between 2005 and 2015, the German federal government ran a special programme called “Perspective 50plus”, which was aimed at integrating the older long-term unemployed into the job market. As part of this, experimental “employment pacts” were devised at a regional level based on the concept of coaching and, over time, it proved possible to develop suitable approaches for the respective regions. What emerged was that coaching approaches were far more likely to lead to success and so they became increasingly relevant as the programme progressed – these successes definitely hit the mark and brought coaching to the attention of the job market stakeholders, including at a federal level.

Today, the landscape that has developed in Germany encompasses a diverse set of regional coaching methods, approaches and projects. Some have been developed as a result of collaboration between the federal government and states, while others have been devised as part of additional job market programmes and projects that are being developed and implemented autonomously by the federal states.

In light of these coaching approaches, Professor Knuth asked the following topical questions:

- › What is coaching? How do we measure coaching?
- › What elements of coaching lead to steps that bring people closer to the job market?

Setting the scene – An overview



As far as Peter-Paul König is concerned, "confidence" is a coach's most important quality: confidence that there is always something inside the coachee that you can latch onto and make something of.

Coaching: Concepts of a counselling format

By way of an introduction to the term "coaching", *Peter-Paul König from the German Coaching Association* provided an etymological, historical, extensional and stipulative definition. Historically, the word "coaching" can be traced back to the Hungarian term "Kocsi", which can be paraphrased as "cart from the village of Kocs". This was translated into English as "coach". The British then adapted this noun by using it as a verb to describe the action of training a horse to pull a coach ("to coach a horse"). Students started calling their mentors "coaches" and eventually the term made its way into the world of work, with managers "coaching" their employees. In Germany, on the other hand, people have come to understand the relationship between the coach and coachee as one that is characterised by independence and freedom of choice.

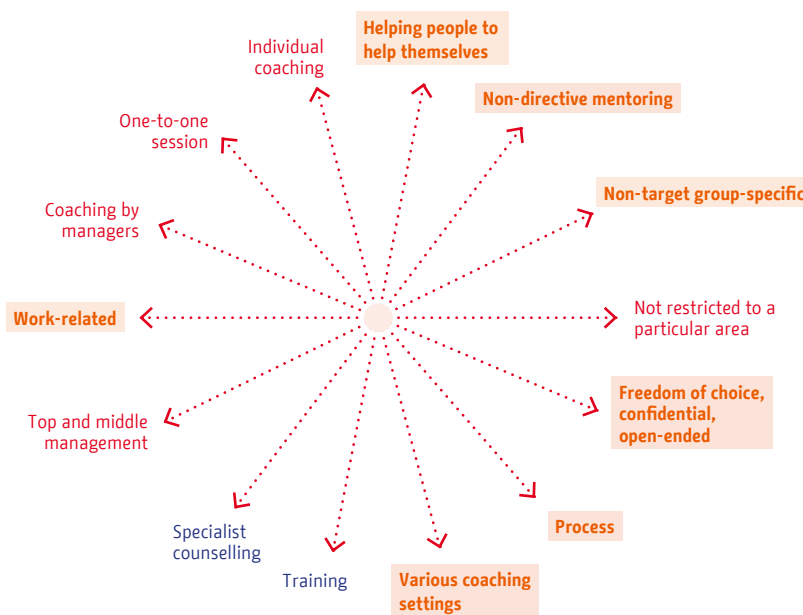
One type of definition that is frequently underestimated as a method of clarifying a term's meaning is its "extensional definition", which involves defining a word based on examples

of everyday usage. However, it does not take long to realise that this strategy is not very productive when attempting to clarify the term "coaching". Nowadays, this term has become a trendy buzzword and so the conceptual scope of a term is no longer clear from its extensional definition. Citing a book by König/Volmer, *Mr König* asserted that reference was now being made to "coaches" in many walks of life; from garden, dancing or driving coaches right through to the father who claimed that he was "coaching" his children rather than "raising" them. To counter this inflation of the term and make it usable in a professional context, a stipulative definition is required, i.e. a strict definition derived from term's extension that narrows down the meaning.

To this end, the first part of the presentation considered the different characteristics that have been ascribed to coaching in the literature. This involved looking at pairs of opposites with the aim of coming up with a suggested definition that could perhaps be implemented at employment agencies and job centres.



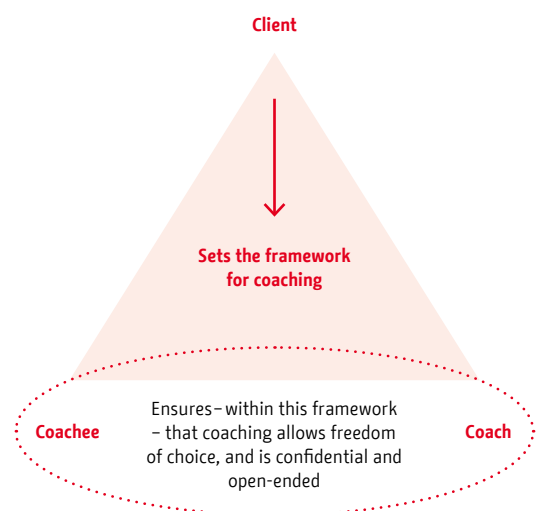
Examples of these near antonyms included “non-directive mentoring” versus “specialist advice”, “individual coaching” versus “various coaching settings”, or “non-target-group-specific” versus “top and middle management”. *Mr König* presented seven pairs of characteristics like these. The characteristics that have been highlighted in orange in the following overview are the ones that made it into his definition.



Source: German Coaching Association

On the basis of this, *Mr König* proposed that coaching should be understood as “helping people to help themselves on a work-related level by offering non-directive mentoring to any target group in a variety of coaching settings (individual, team and group coaching)”. He saw no reason to exclude the long-term unemployed from this form of mentoring by restricting coaching to specific groups such as managers. He explained that coaching could sometimes include specialist counselling and training (highlighted in blue in the overview).

He stressed that coaching must be understood as a process that is based on freedom of choice. Consequently, it is confidential and the results are open-ended. He also pointed out that, in many cases, these elements were undoubtedly not yet fully in place within the context of advice provided by employment agencies and job centres. However, he claimed that even in this environment there was still a way to ensure some kind of openness and freedom of choice within a framework set by the client: by introducing a three-way (or triangular) contract between the client, coachee and coach. He stressed how important it was for any targets, assignments and sanctions (where necessary) to come from the client and not from the coach; otherwise, the relationship of trust would be compromised. The coach helps the coachee to achieve the goals that are set externally; coaches simply offer their services but any actions should usually originate from the coachees themselves.



Source: German Coaching Association



It is very difficult to work with coachees who are not there out of choice and in such cases there is very little chance of success. If coachees are “sent” along rather than coming under their own initiative, the first step is to make them realise that they stand to gain something from the process. In this respect, the question “How can I help you to get rid of me?” (Cecchin / Conen) might be a good place to start.

The first issue to arise during the subsequent discussion concerned people’s freedom of choice to participate in coaching. For instance, the client could potentially force the coachee to attend coaching sessions by imposing specific terms in the aforementioned triangular contract. On the other hand, would it be realistic to adopt an approach that merely relied on communicating the benefits of voluntary participation to the potential coachee? Someone else taking part in the discussion suggested that it might be possible to resolve the dilemma of “freedom of choice versus compulsion” by making it compulsory for potential participants to attend information events while leaving it up to them to decide whether or not they took part in the actual coaching. The coaching process itself is broken down into individual steps. Within these, the provision of specialist counselling and “non-directive mentoring” can play a crucial role in the process and its success. Another person asked what a coach’s most important skill was. *Mr König* cited “confidence” as a coach’s most important quality: confidence that there is always something inside the coachee that you can latch onto and make something of.

Coaching approaches in Germany



Dr Barbara Philippi described how a performance measurement system had been set up to run in parallel with the “Berliner Jobcoaching” programme. This was a special feature of the scheme and it provided an initial indication of its effectiveness.

The “Berliner Job Coaching” and monitoring its success

Following the talk by *Dr Philippi*, *Dr Thomas Günther* went into further detail about the “Berliner Jobcoaching” scheme. He explained that it involved offering job coaching services in two areas. Firstly, they were offered to around 400 coachees in the mainstream job market with a view to helping them hold down their jobs and, secondly, they were offered to those in the publicly funded employment (PFE) sector to help them enter the mainstream job market.

He described the general conditions for the “Berliner Jobcoaching” service as favourable. He explained that 200 job coaches had so far helped approximately 11,000 Berlin residents to find a new job. The mentoring ratio was around 1:40 and the standard coaching period was six months. However, there was also scope for extending the coaching beyond the standard period in cases where there were legitimate grounds for doing so. The performance measurement system is used to oversee the project. During the coaching process, data accumulates concerning what has been covered in the ses-

sions. This is entered and stored in the “Casian” case database in accordance with data protection regulations. The authorities and the coaches have access to a support hotline if they need help using the database. The coaches approach the prospective coachees and tell them what opportunities are available in terms of taking part in the scheme. The prospective coachees are usually approached within the context of other employability schemes that are already in progress, and which focus on mobilisation, qualifications and social integration. Each service user is free to choose whether or not they want to participate in the coaching. So far, 49% of employability scheme participants have opted to do the coaching as a result of this approach. Nevertheless, *Dr Günther* stressed that there was still room to improve cooperation with the job centres in spite of the positive figures. The idea is that the effectiveness of the coaching and odds of successful integration could be increased by getting integration experts and coaches to cooperate closely with one another.



Dr Thomas Günther referred to the positive figures for 2015: Around 15 % of those participating in the “Berliner Jobcoaching” scheme were successfully integrated into the general job market. The figure recorded for those who did not receive the coaching was much lower at just 6.9%.



The “Berliner Jobcoaching” scheme relies on a business process model. As a process, the coaching is broken down into several steps, each of which is based on individual and measurable quality standards. Performance measurement is then carried out on a monthly basis so that they can be monitored and assessed, and so that compliance with them can be ensured. The assessment is carried out using quality performance indicators such as the frequency of consultations, quality of documentation, number of participants in the scheme, and the length of their participation. A workflow is provided for this process in the performance measurement database (“Casian”). All those involved in the process are required to measure the individual coaching steps both qualitatively and quantitatively. Quality assurance is another important aspect along with the need to improve the work of the coaches by providing them with continuing professional development. Performance measurement is overseen by an advisory committee that allows practitioners to enhance and shape the coaching process.

In addition, the individual steps of the coaching process are defined as clearly as possible as part of performance measurement, not least, to make the process completely transparent for the coaches and coachees

themselves. For this purpose, some general coaching objectives and recommended courses of action have been set out in a process manual. Essentially, these objectives can be divided into two categories: The primary objective is to integrate the coachees into the job market and the second one is to remove barriers to employment. Integration (ideally, into forms of employment that are subject to social insurance contributions, but also into training and education) is not only the stated overall objective but also the easiest way to measure success. According to the results for 2015, around 15% of those participating in the “Berliner Jobcoaching” scheme were successfully integrated into the general job market. By contrast, the figure recorded for those who did not receive the coaching was much lower at just 6.9%. It is far more difficult to measure the removal of what are known as integration or employment barriers, or—to put this in more positive terms and relate it to the overall objective—to measure integration progress. These kinds of employment barriers are identified, objectivised and recorded by the coach and coachee at the beginning of the coaching process. The individual and subjective profiling results are objectivised by creating clusters. Examples of such clusters might be motivation difficulties, problems



connected with a person's social environment or family, physical or mental health problems, poor qualifications or the need for social integration as per Section 16a of Book II of the German Social Security Code. The employment barriers faced by the coachee that were discussed at the profiling stage are repeatedly revisited in the course of the coaching process through questioning. This checks whether they still exist and whether any progress has been made, and the results are entered in the database. Not only does this make the removal of employment barriers measurable, but the clusters also provide an overview of how likely the coaching is to succeed. When it came to eliminating barriers successfully, the results achieved for the individual clusters in 2015 ranged between 15 % and 61 % in terms of the percentage of objectives met. According to *Dr Günther*, coaching can only fulfil its intended purpose if both objectives (integration into the job market and the removal of barriers) can be met without having to invest unreasonable levels of resources. There are plans to introduce a further general objective into the “Berliner Jobcoaching” scheme: to maintain and build on its strengths.

During the subsequent discussion, *Senator Dilek Kolat* pointed out two problem areas. She explained that the take-up rate among participants in existing employability schemes was very high in Berlin (around 50%), but that the basic concept on which the employment scheme relied had a significant role to play in the coaching process. For instance, the scheme in question might well attach major importance to the possibility of participants gaining further qualifications, but this was not necessarily compatible with the legal basis of the federal programmes. The second challenge to which she referred was the interface

with the job centre. For example, she said it was important to define and organise the interface between the coach and job centre agent in a particular way so that it would be possible to build on the success that had already been achieved through the coaching on behalf of the welfare authority. Nevertheless, she admitted that certain issues of confidentiality and data protection would still have to be resolved.

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Coaching measures on a national level for persons who are far from the labour market– Individualised approaches in daily business and the federal programme ESF long-term unemployment



In the opinion of Dr Jonathan Fahlbusch from the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, it is not only the relationship between the employer, coach and coachee that is crucial, but also the relationship with the job centre.



In his preliminary remarks, *Dr Jonathan Fahlbusch from the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs* began by pointing out that the federal government had been dealing with coaching approaches for quite some time. To back this up, he quoted a paragraph from the results of the MoZart evaluation that was carried out in 2004 (MoZart was a pilot project for cooperation between job centres and social welfare authorities). “Follow-up support for service users (where required, such as in the event of conflicts) is an important tool for strengthening the placement process—and that includes support in the workplace. Empirical evidence from the projects has revealed that it cements and stabilises the new employment relationship and helps to minimise acute conflicts during the acclimatisation period. At the same time, the provision of follow-up support gives the business greater confidence in the

agency’s ability to resolve conflicts and opens the way for it to place further staff with the business.” The second of the preliminary remarks made by *Dr Fahlbusch* concerned a legal problem: One of the central aims of Book II of the German Social Security Code is for the person’s need for assistance to be successfully overcome. However, as soon as this is achieved, the service user is no longer entitled to benefits, thereby removing the legal framework that enables the coaching to be supported. This means, for example, that downstream coaching is very difficult to fund via Book II of the German Social Security Code. This only leaves what is available generally under basic public services and what Book III of the German Social Security Code can offer to those not entitled to benefits.



Dr Fahlbusch then presented the “federal ESF programme for integrating long-term unemployed recipients of benefits within Book II of the German social security code and services into the general job market”. This programme is geared towards positions on the mainstream job market that are subject to social insurance contributions. The aim of the programme is to find employers for a new target group of employees and to create new prospects for around 23,000 participants on the general job market. The programme is also a chance to make new discoveries about what the long-term unemployed need to help them integrate and what might be possible in this regard. The budget for the programme is approximately 771 million euros, with 403 million coming from European Structural Funds and the other 368 million from federal funds. The programme (generally) caters for those who are over 35 years old, have been unemployed for at least two years, do not possess a usable professional qualification and cannot be integrated into work or education / training in any other way. Another fundamental requirement is that the participants have to be motivated. This is because participation in the scheme is voluntary.

The support offered within the programme relies on a two-pronged approach – by targeting the employers on the one hand and the employees on the other. As regards the former, the scheme operators start by holding intensive conversations with potential employers. They secure jobs for the target group and provide advice about the terms of financial support, such as the declining wage subsidy that employers can claim as part of the programme. To support the employees, the programme offers intensive workplace-based coaching to help them hold down their jobs and to help them tackle or resolve conflicts. The programme

also includes short workplace-related courses and measures to encourage the development of basic competencies. The ultimate objective is to integrate the coachee into the job market in a stable and sustainable manner. In the case of this programme, the coaching concept relies on a phase model. This means that it distinguishes between the following phases: entry phase, stabilisation phase, productive phase and ongoing employment phase. The coaching approach also takes account of each participant’s individual requirements. For instance, both a “standard” and an “intensive” option are offered. These result in different levels of support as regards the length and intensity of the individual coaching phases and the extent of the wage subsidy granted to the employer. Within the given framework, the individual phases can be individually tailored in precise accordance with what is required.

Except in the case of the federal ESF programme aimed at the long-term unemployed, follow-up support is covered by the legal provisions of Section 16g of Book II of the German Social Security Code, the exact nature of which is currently being defined as part of its planned ninth amendment. Once this has been legally defined in accordance with the planned legislative process, coaching will essentially have to deal with the employment situation of the participants rather than with their lives as a whole (in other words, no life coaching is to be provided). Of course, it is clear that people’s work lives cannot be neatly separated from their wider lives and so this distinction is purely functional. One of the issues that will also be considered when evaluating the programme is the extent to which the effectiveness of the coaching is affected by whether it is delivered by the authority or by the job centre.

Support phase	Standard support		Intensive support	
	Duration	Measures	Duration	Measures
Entry phase	6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Generally 3 hours of coaching per week (at least 1 hour per week) › Wage subsidy of 75 % › Workplace-related qualifications and qualifications in the area of basic competencies › Transition-to-work benefits 	12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 5 hours of coaching per week › Wage subsidy of 75 % › Workplace-related qualifications › Qualifications in the area of basic competencies (max. of 2 hours per week) › Transition-to-work benefits
Stabilisation phase	9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › In the first six months: › 1 hour of coaching per week; then no further coaching (as a rule) › Wage subsidy of 50 % › Workplace-related qualifications and qualifications in the area of basic competencies 	12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 3 hours of coaching per week › Wage subsidy of 65 % › Workplace-related qualifications › Qualifications in the area of basic competencies (max. of 2 hours per week)
Productive phase	3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Coaching now only provided in exceptional cases (max. of 1 hour per week for a max. of 3 months) › Wage subsidy of 25 % 	12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1 hour of coaching per week › Wage subsidy of 50 %
Ongoing employment phase	6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Coaching now only provided in exceptional cases (max. of 1 hour per week for a max. of 3 months) › No wage subsidy 	0 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › No ongoing employment phase envisaged

Source: Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs



In *Dr Fahlbusch's* view, it is not only the relationship between the employer, coach and coachee that is crucial, but also the relationship with the job centre. The coach is required to act in the interests of the coachee as much as in the interests of the employer. The only way to tackle or resolve a conflict in the workplace is by paying attention to the problems of both parties.

As far as Dr Fahlbusch is concerned, this concept of coaching gives rise to certain questions when researching its effectiveness (while also allowing for the fact that needs and intervention requirements will change constantly in the course of the coaching). These questions are:

- › What depth of intervention should the coaching involve (instruction–supervision, advice–support, assistance–take-over, mentoring–representation)?
- › How long should the intervention period last, both in terms of the coaching as a whole and the individual phases?

- › Is it possible to integrate needs later on in the coaching process that were considered irrelevant at the beginning?

Questions also arise concerning the level of acceptance by the relevant stakeholders:

- › How do employers respond to the coaching offering? Do they accept it?
- › How does coaching fit into the company's organisational structure?
- › What are the habituation, developmental and learning effects on the target group? The programme is predominantly aimed at people with experience of social services. Usually, they have become highly accustomed to relying on benefits. To what extent are they prepared to play a part in changing their own situation? How can this be measured when researching the effectiveness of programmes?

Coaching within the framework of publicly funded employment in North Rhine-Westphalia



Barbara Molitor from the Ministry of Labour, Integration and Social Affairs of North Rhine-Westphalia summed up the pilot projects for “publicly funded employment (PFE) in North Rhine-Westphalia” by saying that although the changes witnessed might appear small from the outside, for the people concerned they represented a major qualitative improvement.



The next speaker was *Barbara Molitor from the Ministry of Labour, Integration and Social Affairs of North Rhine-Westphalia*. The central focus of her presentation was a set of pilot projects called “Publicly funded employment (PFE) in North Rhine-Westphalia”, which were run between 2013 and 2015. The target group consisted of long-term benefit claimants who were fit for work (i.e. those who had received monthly benefits within Book II of the German Social Security Code at least 21 times over the previous 24 months). The first aim of the programme was to integrate the participants into publicly funded forms of employment that were subject to social insurance contributions and offered remuneration in accordance with wage bargaining agreements and standard local rates of pay. The second aim was to research the following areas: how to determine whether progress was being made

with regard to integration, to see how systematic links to local authority services might help support the process, and to investigate the need for further forms of compensation for below-average productivity and what these might look like. Another focus of the programme was to check whether there was a basis for reforming instruments at a federal level in the future.

The pilot programme encompassed 26 projects offering around 760 jobs with employers in the charity and public sectors. Approximately 70 job coaches participated in these projects. The programme was financed partly by federal state/ESF funds (€11 million) and partly by job centre funds (€22 million). 11 out of 16 of the regions in North Rhine-Westphalia took part and 26 job centres were involved. The programme was made up of several support components—provided by different institutions.



The participants were selected at the job centre through profiling. The job centres paid a wage subsidy of up to 75 % for a maximum of 24 months. The remaining 25 % of the wage had to be generated by the actual employer. The coaching was workplace-based (generally for 24 months). Where necessary, the rural or urban districts provided integration services, such as debt or addiction counselling. In addition, federal state funding and the European Social Fund made it possible to finance individual qualification modules that were tailored to specific cases. G.I.B. (a state consulting company from North Rhine-Westphalia) provided specialist support for the pilot project and was responsible for monitoring it at the same time. The project was evaluated on a state-wide basis by IAB North Rhine-Westphalia and ISG.

In 2013, the financial support provided under the pilot project was adopted as an official guideline. Since the guideline was adopted, both an upstream coaching period (up to three months before the employment phase) and a downstream coaching period (up to six months after the person has been successfully placed in work) can be financed.

Ms Molitor summed up by saying that the success of the publicly funded employment scheme in North Rhine-Westphalia was down to the fact that coaching approaches had been combined with employment and qualifications, and linked to other local authority services. She added that the coaches still had to be carefully selected in order for the coaching to succeed. She said they had to have a sound grasp of methodology and had to possess appropriate professional experience.

To incorporate methods of measuring competence and how much compensation should be paid to employers to cover the costs of below-average productivity, intensive discussions were held together with the following: the regional directorate (of the Federal Employment Agency) of North Rhine-Westphalia, the people providing specialist support, the evaluators and the sponsors of the pilot projects. As a result of these discussions, it became clear that the legal framework for financing a wage subsidy does not currently offer sufficient flexibility. The criteria that have to be met before below-average productivity can be compensated via the wage subsidy barely take into account how much progress the participants make during the scheme and how much of an improvement there is in their social participation.

Ms Molitor concluded her talk by asserting that although the changes identified in the evaluation might appear small from the outside, for the people concerned they represented a major qualitative improvement. In light of this, it was her view that the support programme of North Rhine-Westphalia should definitely continue.



Dr Frank Bauer from IAB North Rhine-Westphalia gave a detailed presentation that explained the evaluation approach used for the pilot project in North Rhine-Westphalia.



Dr Frank Bauer from the Institute of Employment Research North Rhine-Westphalia followed up the presentation by *Ms Molitor* with details of the evaluation approach that had been adopted for the pilot project in North Rhine-Westphalia.

He explained that the pilot projects in North Rhine-Westphalia had been based on a particular approach and that what made this special was its general scepticism towards the idea that “one size fits all”. Instead of this, the focus was on individualised techniques. This meant that the evaluation process faced some major issues and challenges that called for basic clarification. For instance, it proved extremely difficult to apply existing understandings of coaching concepts and socio-pedagogical support to this kind of individualised approach. When it comes to publicly funded employment, these concepts turn out to be inadequate because they suggest that there is a precise body of knowledge already available to say exactly what is being done and what is required. As well as defining a concept to describe “what is actually being done” (i.e. problem determination), a conceptual/analytical framework also had to be devised to cover various types of solution.

Answers had to be found to the following questions:

- › What problem faced by the subsidised organisations / companies needs to be solved? *In other words, what is actually being done within the companies?*
- › What contribution can specialists make in this regard? *In other words, what action must be taken to support the coachee in his or her new job?*
- › What kinds of stakeholder constellations affect the work of the coaches? *In other words, what is the basic constellation (or arrangement) of those who are stakeholders in the coaching as well as those who are stakeholders in the workplace?*
- › What empirical general conditions occur regularly within the sphere of activity and bring about a change in the intervention approach?

The answers to these questions make it possible to narrow down the nature of the coaching or socio-pedagogical mentoring and the associated measurement methods.



During the next part of his presentation, *Dr Bauer* provided a definition of the target group from the perspective of the lawmakers. According to this definition, it is made up of those who—for various reasons—have a wide range of support needs. And that is why Section 16e of Book II of the German Social Security Code allows compensation to be paid for below-average productivity. In turn, this definition carries implications for the employment creators and companies involved. This is because an employer who hires someone from this target group is likely to discover that the performance capabilities of the individual are restricted due to his or her personal problems. And, in some cases, they may even find that company rules get broken as a result of misconduct. Consequently, the employee must be supported in a particular way, although—from the company’s perspective—this is only worthwhile if it becomes clear that the employee is adapting and learning, and if there is the potential for his or her performance to improve as a result. The core focus of the coach’s work is to “overcome potential conflicts” within the company that could provide grounds for dismissal. Consequently, the aim of the coaching is to stabilise the employment relationship. The success of the coaching not only depends significantly on the employee’s “willingness to change” but also on how well various stakeholders within the organisation interact:

- › Line manager / specialist instructor
- › Job coach / mentor
- › Management

In the opinion of *Dr Bauer*, the line manager or specialist instructor has a very important role to play. As part of their everyday work, they must ensure that everyone in the workplace complies with the company’s code of conduct. Similarly, certain productivity levels have to be maintained within the company and they are answerable to management for this. This results in a highly demanding attitude towards employees. However, when an employee comes from the target group (i.e. people with support needs), this attitude has to be accompanied by an ability to carefully discern whether shortcomings are conduct-related or attributable to personal problems. The question that has to be asked in the event of problems is: Is the employee “unable” or “unwilling” to deliver the required level of performance? Anyone attempting to answer this question must possess solid expertise in dealing with the target group concerned, but this is something that instructors and line managers do not usually have. Therefore, a support team must be created by appointing special experts to tackle this particular problem (the ability to recognise when performance restrictions are due to personal problems).

This kind of support ensures that misconduct due to personal problems is correctly identified, that it is addressed by offering assistance rather than imposing sanctions, and that it is tolerated to a reasonable degree—at least in the short term. Misconduct of this kind often stems from specific circumstances in the lives of the employees. Part of the coach’s job is to identify these problem areas and, where applicable, to come up with possible solutions or refer the employee to external professionals.



Thus, with this kind of organisational structure, the role of the support service is to intervene and act as a mediator. For this reason, the support service has to meet certain requirements that are closely linked to pedagogical skills and experience connected with the specific target group. This is the only way to create a bond that is built on trust and ensures the necessary confidentiality.

When latent conflicts develop between the instructor and support service regarding how to deal with a particular instance of misconduct, the management must step in as a mediator and, where necessary, bring about a decision to establish an equilibrium.

The exact nature of the support approach can be narrowed down by asking the following questions:

- › Are the coaches employed directly by the company or are they external parties as far as the company is concerned?
- › Is the support service “copresent” in terms of time and location—in other words, do the coaches regularly witness conflicts at the company or do they just hear about them second-hand on the rare occasions when they visit?
- › Are the “instructor” and “coach” roles assigned to different members of staff or are both roles performed by the same person?
- › What qualifications are used to determine whether the support staff are professionally competent? For example, do they have specific pedagogical qualifications or are other types of qualification applicable?
- › Has the company actually designed the position of “coach” specifically for a social pedagogue or are other skills expected?

Against this backdrop, valid results can only be achieved when measuring effectiveness if – first and foremost – it is clear what exactly is being measured. Within this context, dependent variables (such as participation and the effects of employment) are measured on the basis of the following determinant factors: “type of support”, “type and scope of work” and “type of coaching service”. Therefore, before effectiveness can be measured on the basis of standardised data, it is absolutely essential to obtain an empirically and conceptually precise understanding of the fundamental mechanisms by which the interventions or treatments work, and an awareness of the systematic variations in how these mechanisms might unfold. Otherwise, there is a risk of drawing false conclusions.

During the subsequent discussion, someone asked whether the effectiveness of the pilot schemes had also been studied from the point of view of gender. *Dr Bauer* confirmed that it had. The studies had revealed that the schemes had had a greater impact on women. One of the reasons for this is that women are more likely to signal their needs during the coaching process. Regarding the issue of compensation for below-average productivity, it was remarked that the wage subsidy rules are set for the entire period during which subsidies are paid under a programme. As a result, they are not flexible enough to cope with positive developments among the participants. That is why the increments for reducing the wage subsidy proved so inflexible in the context of the federal ESF programme (for integrating long-term unemployed recipients of benefits and services). The federal states, on the other hand, attached a great deal of importance to being able to tailor them to the individual in a flexible way.



Consequently, the recommended approach would be to reduce wage subsidies over the life of the project to reflect changes in participants' performance. But how can these be achieved in practice? How can an improvement in productivity be measured more effectively over time with a view to deciding whether compensation for below-average productivity should, for example, be individually set at 60% instead of 75% at some subsequent point? The results depend on what measurement method is selected. Job coaches and social pedagogues have incorporated competence measurement techniques into their processes. However, an even more important factor for measurements is the issue of interactivity. It is necessary to implement an operational measurement system.

Another contribution by one of the delegates focused on whether it made more sense to offer qualifications individually or in groups and what qualifications a coach must possess. According to one response, there are a whole host of different qualification approaches, ranging from group-based to individual ones. One thing was clear: the work of the coaches should ultimately be clearly geared towards integrating people into the mainstream job market. Someone asked whether this could really be achieved with "sponsors of the subsidised job market". One delegate responded by saying that in her experience, the sponsors did not try to "cling on to people".

Senator Dilek Kolat rounded off this set of topics by saying that—unfortunately—the presentation of the evaluation results had been too brief due to time constraints, but that they were of major interest, and not just to Berlin. She said that she was extremely keen to find out more. Although there was no denying that the coaching approach was a highly effective model, she felt that it was important to compare and analyse the results and experience obtained from individual federal states. She suggested that Berlin and North Rhine-Westphalia might want to swap information with one another for this purpose while, at the same time, attempting to address the more general question of what is required to get the long-term employed into work. The aim would be to pass the findings on to the federal government. This would have to be followed by efforts to determine how future instruments might be shaped at a federal level in order to achieve maximum success.

Group coaching at the Offenbach job centre – A practical example



Brunhilde Link stressed that group coaching could only truly succeed in integrating the service users socially and professionally if combined with individual coaching.



The next speaker was *Brunhilde Link from the “Pro-Work district of Offenbach” job centre*, who presented the group coaching concept that was being used there.

The basic underlying assumption of group coaching is that the interactive processes help to motivate service users, thereby bringing about changes in behaviour.

With group coaching, the role that the service user plays in the coaching process becomes very different, particularly when compared to an individual coaching session. Service users stop thinking of themselves as mere recipients of assistance and instead come to see themselves as experts that can address their own situations. As a result, they are no longer passive recipients of counselling services but have to engage actively with the coaching process. Effectively, what this means is that counselling services turn into facilitation of the actual coaching process.

Perspectives and roles change continuously as a result of the group dynamics, leading to lots of variety within the coaching process as a whole. This becomes really interesting when the group is made up of people from different social and cultural backgrounds because that is when the processes of group dynamics have a particularly positive impact. In such cases, service users who are involved in group coaching may even end up helping other members of the group (by motivating them, enabling them to progress or assisting them with conflicts) while simultaneously reflecting on their own work situations and dealings with others. This contrasts starkly with the usual face-to-face technique that is used in conventional counselling. Group coaching softens the “position of power” held by the counsellor, which takes the pressure off (so to speak) and frees the service user from dependency.



The group coaching scheme at the “Pro-Work – district of Offenbach” job centre came about as part of the federal programme called “Perspective 50plus”). This was based on the idea of empowerment, which is when the participants’ own abilities and resources are harnessed so that they can take greater personal responsibility and improve their self-management skills. Not only did this strengthen the position of the service user but also that of the job centre employee. The aim of the group coaching scheme was (and still is) to tap into the group dynamics and the associated effects in order to make the coaching process more transparent and less one-sided, to encourage joint decisions and – at the same time – to help the participants to take more personal responsibility.

In order for this kind of coaching to be successful, the job centre employees have to be perfectly trained using a “train the trainer” approach. This means familiarising them with the dynamics that come into play within a group. As far as these are concerned, it is absolutely essential that the employees remain fully in control and self-confident throughout all the coaching sessions. Consequently, the first step was to develop these qualities in them through workshops and role plays, and then allow time for reflection. In addition, some initial coaching concepts were trialled within the team under the guidance and support of external mentors. The next step was to put the techniques identified into practice and reflect on them together with the participants during the group events. Another factor that is vital for success is the creation of an environment in which coaches actively share their experiences on an ongoing basis. Schemes are evaluated after three months once the concepts, which have already been tweaked once, have been trialled in practice. This is a question of analysing their strengths and weaknesses and further adjusting them as necessary.

Ms Link then went on to present the integration agreement group coaching programme in detail. The integration agreement sets out contractually what is expected of the service user, as well as the discretionary benefits that may be provided by the job centre. At this point, it is very important that certain things are done. The aim of the integration agreement group coaching programme is to help the service user grasp the principles of “championing and challenging” as defined by Book II of the German Social Security Code. Therefore, the opportunities afforded by the law in terms of qualifications and integration into the job market have to be jointly explored. In this way, the participants can be provided with a better understanding of the relevant provisions of Book II of the German Social Security Code.

The integration agreement coaching programme is divided into two one-day modules, which are structured thematically.

On the first day, there is a workshop that provides general information about the integration agreement:

- › Content and legal foundations of the integration agreement
- › Rights and obligations
- › Obligations to cooperate, legal consequences of breaching obligations
- › Championing and challenging
- › Qualifications offered
- › Personal strengths profile (homework)



The second day focuses on analysing each person's own situation and exploring possible ways of overcoming the need for assistance:

- › Personal strengths profile: Soft and hard skills
- › Self-assessment and an opportunity for peer mentoring
- › Creation of a support plan
- › Conclusion of an integration agreement and scheduling of the date for the next session

Quality control is achieved by means of feedback questionnaires, joint reflection sessions involving job coaches and event leaders, case conferences among colleagues and a final event report.

Ms Link subsequently reported on the programme's successes as identified by the evaluation. The primary finding was that the assumptions underlying the concept—particularly with regard to empowerment and group dynamics—were even more applicable than previously thought. Group-based job coaching is 26% more effective than 1:1 sessions. One of the key reasons for this is that the participants are able to coach each other and are more likely to become conscious of—and to express—their own needs and skills as part of the reflective group work. This results in integration agreements that are better tailored to the individual than with the traditional approach. One of the main discoveries was that the peer motivation tasks undertaken during the group coaching brought about positive changes in behaviour. In turn, this frequently resulted in mobilising the majority of participants. As for the number of group coaching participants

who go on to be placed in employment, the figure stands at 30%. Last but not least, this highly successful coaching strategy not only improves the image of the case manager but also of the job centre itself.

Nevertheless, group coaching can only truly succeed if it is combined with individual coaching. When the two coaching approaches are perfectly intertwined, they can provide the basis for integrating the service user successfully on both a social and a professional level.

In the rural district of Offenbach, group coaching has now been introduced across the board at the job centre and is systematically used in all areas and with all target groups.

The group coaching portfolio included:

- › Integration agreement in groups
- › Group coaching for users of the direct job matching service
- › Improvement of collaborative skills
- › Group coaching following a creative project
- › Group coaching incorporating use of native language (Turkish and Italian offered to date)
- › Training of service users to help them use the job site
- › Job application training
- › Various information events about basic social security and job coaching
- › In-depth profiling
- › Group event for migrants
- › “Positive thinking” group event



The first issue to arise during the subsequent discussion was the cost of adopting such an elaborate group coaching approach. *Brunhilde Link* acknowledged that it had initially called for additional investment by the job centre. However, over the course of 10 years, the group coaching approaches had now become cost-neutral. Another question concerned the nature of the relationship between the coachee and coach in a group coaching context, and the role of the case manager who was otherwise responsible for the service user. *Brunhilde Link* described how different approaches were adopted for specific types of event. She explained that the case manager who was responsible for the service user on other levels did attend integration agreement group events but not other types of group coaching event.

Discussion of the approaches in Germany and recommendations for further work in Berlin

At this point, Boris Velter said that he would be very interested to learn about the experiences of other regions and federal states in the area of job coaching. He then asked various questions relating to the presentations heard so far. For what kinds of cases would coaching be a particularly effective method? What sort of problems is coaching best at solving or tackling? How long should a course of coaching last? Is a longer period of mentoring more productive? After all, surely a group coaching course spanning just one day or even a few days cannot be the key to achieving long-term integration into the job market. In the course of the subsequent discussion, it became clear that the range of available coaching methods is huge and that they are based on different understandings of how service users should be coached. People felt that the crucial factor was to work out how intensive the coaching needed to be for specific groups. The one thing on which they all agreed was that a one-off event spanning two days and an improved integration agreement were not sufficient – on their own – to get people into work. According to one delegate, the concepts underlying the programmes in Berlin and North Rhine-Westphalia were more appropriate than the group coaching approach for helping people who are extremely distant from the job market. Another person argued that support programmes should not be subject to major restrictions from the outset, but needed to be more open and offer greater flexibility. If certain components of a programme were not mandatory, it would be possible to select/offer alternatives within the programme concerned. From the federal government's perspective, it is not worth creating special offerings for particular target groups when these can only be made available for the duration of the respective support programme. Instead, approaches such as coaching should be integrated structurally into day-to-day operations. Two other suggestions were that spe-

cific interventions could be offered for certain target groups with particular problems or that a mixture of methods could be employed to cater for all target groups. Someone else argued that coaching was primarily a tool for improving the mentoring ratio. However, the jury was still out as to which specific support methods were best suited to eliminating particular barriers. Likewise, it was not yet clear how the various employment barriers could best be put into "clusters". Someone else said that the regional diversity of the coaching approaches was an important issue – because the job market conditions in Offenbach were not the same as those in Berlin-Neukölln. One delegate claimed that coaching was still to be regarded as uncharted territory and experimental ground. With regard to the improved mentoring ratio, somebody said that it was generally worth investing in personal services within the context of job market policy rather than merely providing wage subsidies and funding other measures. This had also been one of the findings when the federal programme called "Perspective 50plus" was evaluated. Although this called for higher levels of human resources and lower mentoring ratios than the usual day-to-day operations, the overall costs of successfully integrating and mobilising an individual participant were lower. The coaching process should be designed on a continuum to cover the period before, during and after the individual is integrated into the job market so that the effects are long-lasting. It is important that the coaching be accepted by the companies and the employees working within them. It also makes sense to focus more intensely on health problems (particularly mental health issues) that represent obstacles to job market integration. However, this means that the coach has to recognise his or her own limits and, in cases of doubt, refer the coachee to other professionals, such as therapists. As an "integration facilitator", they must have access to a corresponding network of experts.



During the discussion, delegates also bemoaned the fact that coaching had so far only been considered within particular organisations and as part of support programmes. People felt that it was important to organise transitions at the interfaces such as the interface between the job centre and the company. Another issue that arose during the discussion was whether a mentoring ratio of 1:40 was appropriate or if some other ratio might be better, and whether it even made sense to stipulate such a ratio in the first place, as well as the extent to which this depended on the actual needs of the service user. After that, the discussion turned to positive experiences with micro-enterprises—for example, some individuals had successfully completed a forklift truck course and, with the support of coaches, had been kept in work. One delegate thought that it made sense to have a mentoring ratio of 1:20 and she backed this up with examples from her own experience. She felt that the coaching should last for two years—starting three months before the coachee began his or her job and finishing six months after the end of the scheme. She was also of the opinion that a coach had to be capable of handing the coachee over to other professionals.

In addition, she felt that there should not be any legally standardised wage subsidies and that, instead, these should be individually customisable. The discussion also addressed the issue of what constituted the correct coaching “dose”. It was felt that having too many regular hours of coaching a week might put too much pressure on both the participant and the employer and so prove counterproductive. It was important to remember that a lot of the work carried out as part of the coaching process took place without the involvement of the service user. Often, this work related to the everyday tasks of life, such as applying for treatment at a health resort, taking preventive action or dealing with a chronically ill child. Service users often had general structural problems and so “lacked confidence” at the doctor’s, at school and at work. In such cases, it was a question of tackling the structural problems together with these individuals.

Approaches to coaching in Europe



In her presentation, Belen García Díaz, spoke about the “employment shuttle”, which aims to increase participants’ chances of gaining access to the job market and, in turn, to provide businesses with suitable staff.

“Employment shuttles” based on coaching – an example from Madrid

Belen García Díaz, General director of the employment agency in Madrid, spoke about how the employment agency that she manages in Madrid has been restructured by with new labour orientation approaches such “employment shuttle” and employment travel.

After 4 years in the private sector Garcia returned to the employment agency and discovered that hardly any structural changes had been made since she left, and together with approximately 300 colleagues she set out to change this. For example large numbers of qualifications were being offered which did not relate in any way to businesses. She took on the task of redefining the relationship between the employment agency, businesses and customers and of re-establishing trust between the two groups. 75 % of the unemployed had never even used public employment services, rather made use of private agencies instead. Businesses also prefer to employ people between the ages of 30 and 35, making it very difficult for people over 45. The aim was to develop a program

together with businesses to ensure that they are provided with suitable staff that are able to meet their requirements and at the same time develop a “roadmap” for guiding unemployed people towards the job market. It was thus agreed to create a joint platform for businesses and jobseekers. This was based on determining the skills and abilities required by the job market which were defined in advance with businesses. At the beginning mostly large, multinational companies were involved. A year after the program was developed there had already been a 12 % increase in the number of employment contracts being signed.



The employment shuttle itself describes the program “behind” the platform. The employment shuttle aims to increase participants’ chances of gaining access to the job market or to self-employment. The shuttle consists of a heterogeneous team of active long-term unemployed people, who are willing to integrate and are able to offer one another mutual encouragement and support, to help them become visible to the job market, to gain a foothold there and offer mutual help and support in this. The work in shuttles was borrowed heavily from the organisational structures of companies (teamwork in different departments). In this way transversal skills, such as personal autonomy, team and networking abilities, time management and organisational skills are acquired and improved in a natural environment. Generally, the individual employment shuttles consist of 20 participants aged up to 35. Each shuttle was monitored by trained staff, who supported the working groups and participants on their way to finding work. First of all, about 20-22 skills and abilities that are relevant to the workplace were identified and documented in the “shuttles” so that they could then be worked on. It was also important to strengthen the resilience of the participants and to take a realistic look at the job market – to lower their expectations of achieving a dream job and work towards a job that was more realistic to obtain.

Ms Garcia notes that the success of the concept is clear from the success rate of placements. In Madrid itself there are three shuttles for younger people with a placement rate of 60%. However, this was only 10% for older participants.

Spain is planning to increase the program from 2016 to 2019 to about 450 employment shuttles for over 11,350 young people. Between 2014 and 2015 the number of shuttles was only 55, spread across 32 towns with about 1,100 participating young people.

In terms of measuring the success of the project, the great advantage of the shuttle is its compact organisation. The success achieved by the participants and the changes relating to personal skills could clearly be attributed to the work carried out in the shuttles. This is a considerable advantage for analysing the cost-benefit of the project. Success relating to the development of the participants could thus be identified as net gains. The participatory process in the shuttles ensures a continual improvement in quality, the credibility of the project and good results. The innovation of the project in this form is also a huge advantage.



The intrinsic qualification process in the employment shuttle is designed as a journey (Journey to Employment) of permanent reinvention of the program itself and the participants. On the first day the participant receives a boarding pass and commences his journey according to a “timetable”. This ensures that people who leave the program can be given the best possible qualification and are thus prepared to meet the challenges of the job market.

Furthermore, the shuttles apply a competency model, divided into three areas: key skills, technical skills and transversal skills, which are required by businesses and requested in job offers. A further important skill for participants is general access to the jobs market, i.e. the ability to look for a job independently. Each participant defines a career goal in order to board the shuttle. After a detailed skills assessment a timetable is drawn up that is used to outline the process or the journey and provides a route to obtaining the skills and abilities required for the respective job. The necessary skills are developed in seven areas of activity by means of training, workshops, seminars and placements.

In summary, the Journey to Employment as a method of employment shuttle is carried out in five steps:

- 1.** Welcoming participants in individual and/or group discussions
- 2.** Presentation of the journey (Journey to Employment) in groups
- 3.** Check-in: hand over of proposed timetable, boarding pass, ID and planning
- 4.** Journey through the seven areas of activity (self-knowledge / awareness; job market; reinventing yourself; where do I start looking for a job and how can I manage this; how do I achieve my goal; make contact; improve skills)
- 5.** Check-out: End of journey. This may possibly be a new journey or change of plan; evaluation of achievements and new skills.

In response to the question about how long the journey to employment takes, *Belen García Díaz* noted that it depends on the respective needs of the client. The process may take longer if the client has problems with language, reading or writing, for example. An attempt is made to define a learning curve. Sometimes it is not possible to find a job for the relevant participant in a business. In this case, such people are prepared for a role within social services.

“Link to work” – bridges to employment and recording “soft outcomes”



Jan De Mets talked about his two projects in the city of Ghent. As part of this, he described the importance of measuring “soft outcomes” and changes in the area of soft skills.



Jan De Mets gave a presentation about the “Link to work” project in the city of Ghent, which has been supported for two years by funding from the European Social fund.

The Link to work project is part of the GSIW (Gent, stad in Werking–Ghent, town in work), partnership for more and better work. This platform is supported by the city of Ghent. It has been set up to improve the dialogue between various different organisations associated with the job market and the planning of general strategies relevant to the job market. For example, employer and employee organisations, educational and non-governmental organisations and charitable organisations are represented in the GSIW. Particular mention should be given to the VDAB–Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsmiddeling (the Flemish employment agency), the Integratiedienst Stad Gent, “DeSloep” (The Boat)–a non-governmental organisation (NGO) for families with young children in precarious living conditions and the Centrum voor Algemeen Welzijn (the centre for general welfare).

The city of Ghent and its job market have been faced with a large amount of immigration over the past eight years. There has been a significant flow of migration from the new EU member states, particularly from Bulgaria and Slovakia. Many of the new migrants are Roma people and originate from an ethnic minority in their countries of origin. The main reason for migration is the attraction of the Belgian job market. Many of the migrants are hopeful of finding work in Ghent; however, most of the migrants are poorly qualified for the job market. The main concerns are incomplete or low levels of education, inexperience in the job market, and complex problems relating to general living conditions. The Link to work project is an attempt to find new ways of addressing the growing challenges caused by migration.



Link to work started with two experimental projects on mediation and developed the project “Intermediaries towards employment”- (“Anchor figures”). Two mediators at the Flemish employment agency put east European job seekers (“new citizens”) in contact with a suitable adviser within the Flemish employment agency or help them gain suitable qualifications, such as language courses or other qualifications. People are placed either individually or in groups. Both project mediators have a Bulgarian or Slovakian migrant background, helping to improve access to the people in these communities by overcoming language barriers on the one hand and improving the understanding of this target group’s cultural identity on the other. This is particularly relevant to the Roma minority. To some extent immigrants have had bad experiences with public authorities — especially in their country of origin. The fact that the mediators belong to the same ethnic group, understand the culture and are also not connected to the authorities means that the level of trust is greatly increased.

The second project was “Go between”, initially implemented in cooperation between the Flemish employment agency and the non-governmental organisation “DeSloep” and has now been extended to the charitable organisation CAW. DeSloep helps young families with children who have problems regarding education, language, finances, and submitting applications to the authorities. In the “Go between” project, staff members from “DeSloep” put jobseekers in touch with an adviser at the job centre and remain in close contact with both parties the whole time.

In both of these approaches Link to work had to define the profile of a mediator in this situation and the tasks that he/she are responsible for. This is of crucial importance to the implementation of a professional mediator project. The objective of Link to work is to make mediation an essential way of dealing with people in precarious living conditions and to help concentrate efforts towards integrating people into the job market. The task of mediation is characterised by building “bridges”, i.e. through mediation a network is organised for a target group to help them connect with the various different authorities and organisations of the social services. It supports the target group in gaining access to the relevant authorities and guides them in their search for suitable or necessary qualifications and towards other support from charitable institutions.

Link to work discovered that it is essential for the mediators to gain the trust not only of the target group but that of the authorities and organisations too. However, the idea of mediation with a very broad remit also presents challenges, for example the high-frequency of client enquiries, mostly relating to daily living conditions, which is difficult to control. It is therefore essential to prevent mediators being overburdened by this.



The results of implementing both programs are very positive. Thus in the Link to work program 107 people (72 Bulgarians, 35 Slovaks) have already been integrated into work, which corresponds to 25-30% of participants, a third of which managed to find permanent employment. Go between reached 73 people, 49 of whom were registered with the Flemish Employment Agency, 16 found jobs—seven of these were permanent. Furthermore, Go between has also been successful with regard to qualifications. About 20 people participated in language lessons, 45 looked for work using a “computer corner”, 13 participated in lessons on social orientation and 11 in activities in the Bulgarian women’s group.

As it cannot always be assumed that the “hard” outcome of integration into the job market will be achieved, due to the mostly poor employability of the target group, it is also important to measure “soft” outcomes, i.e. to measure changes in the area of soft skills. Lack of integration into the job market does not mean that the person has stopped developing or is not developing skills. It is important to support, measure and illustrate this fact. The fact that employers in the Ghent harbour have requested more training in soft skills clearly reflects the need to take steps in this area.

The achievement of soft outcomes is measured experimentally in Ghent in four “stages”. The first stage relates directly to the clients. Data is collected and evaluated at this point to show how the client has developed individually. This data mainly relates to changes in behaviour and in the self-awareness of the client. In the second stage the relationship between the coach and the client is measured. This data is used to determine and reflect important intermediate steps in the mediation and qualification process. A portfolio of the training and qualifications completed by the client can be used if necessary for a job application. In the third stage data is collected and mapped out which reflects the coaching process as such. This data is used to evaluate the coaching in the team and, if necessary, carry out fine tuning or improvements, or to plan a strategy for future orientation. In the fourth stage data is collected and mapped out, which is very important for higher-level organisations. This stage corresponds in form to a report, which shows the success of the whole project or program and illustrates the significant changes in clients in the area of soft skills.

In one project the changes in the behaviour and awareness of the client are measured by the “Outcome Star” instrument. The project is examining whether another instrument, “Soul Record”, might be useful and applicable. In the outcome star seven important areas of soft skills are checked regularly and evaluated (self-) reflectively in a points system of 1–10. This is carried out after an interval of six months and is evaluated both by the client and also a possible employer.



The key areas here are:

1. Work-specific skills
2. Motivation
3. Job-seeking skills
4. Stability
5. Basic skills
6. Social skills for work
7. Challenges

The outcome stars measure is used to provide a holistic representation of the way a person has changed. The different areas can be adjusted and changed at any time.

The Soul Record questionnaire covers three areas:

1. Attitude
2. Personal / interpersonal
3. Practice

Each of these areas includes several questions, which can be answered on a scale of 1–6 (1 = I strongly agree, 2 = I agree [...] 6 = I strongly disagree).

Possible questions are:

- › I am really trying to do things which are important for me
- › I get on well with other people
- › I feel that I am part of the organisation / company
- › I am reliable and carry out tasks on time
- › I am well organised
- › I am aware of health and safety risks

Here the approach is mainly holistic and provides insight into changes with regard to soft skills. The acquired data is saved for personal use and as metadata in an online database (Soul record) and can be used for further evaluation. Both query systems can be configured individually and should reflect the individualised and holistic approach. However, it is important not to spend too much time on acquiring data. It is not necessary to record unimportant and unnecessary data for the process to be effective.



The first part of the discussion tackled the idea of mediation. One of the key problems identified was not only the distance of the unemployed from the job market but also the distance of the coaches or mediators from the people who are actively involved in it. For this reason, the concept of mediation as a “bridge” was of great interest. Another point to emerge was the extreme importance of measuring integration progress—because this is the only way to ensure that the work of coaches or mediators is properly “visible” and “valued”; if, on the other hand, you only counted how many instances of integration had been achieved, the work would become invisible and undervalued in the process. The example of Belgium sparked a debate about where mediators come from, with attention switching to the situation in Germany. One person felt that Germany did not generally have enough trained staff with a migrant background to cater for the many unemployed migrants in the country. On the other hand, nor was it considered advisable to only assign mentors with a Turkish background to clients that were originally from Turkey, for example. *Jan De Mets* responded to this by saying that the role could just as easily be assumed by other mediators who did not share the particular migrant background concerned.

Nevertheless, he claimed that positive discrimination could be beneficial—and was sometimes necessary—for a certain period of time. Consequently, the key issue was not whether mediators had a migrant background of this kind but whether they were optimally qualified for their work. The role of the mediator was positively highlighted as a way of opening doors into the target group. In the district of Offenbach, very good results had been achieved with extremely mixed groups, i.e. where the group members came from various cultures and linguistic groups. Indeed, this success was partly attributable to the fact that this situation forced everyone to speak a common language. *Jan De Mets* added that, as part of the “Link to Work” project, efforts were being made to work in teams of two when placing people in employment.

Talent Match London – Achieve. Enable. Connect.



Steph Taylor brought the perspective of London to bear by talking about a job market project called “Talent Match”. The effectiveness of this programme is measured by looking at the emotional and social changes that the young people undergo during the process.



Steph Taylor’s contribution described the Talent Match project of “London Youth”, a network of youth organisations in London.

“Talent Match” is funded by around 100 million pounds of British lottery money in 21 regions of Great Britain. London Youth received a share of about 10 million pounds from this fund to implement the Talent Match project in the London area over a period of 5 years.

Around 148,000 young people in London receive social benefits, a further estimated 56,000 young people are not included in any statistics and thus do not receive any help in managing their lives. Many of these young people live with their parents or have experience of homelessness. As a youth organisation London Youth is trying to address these problems with the Talent Match project and provide opportunities in the job market for participants aged up to 24. The level of qualifications of the 2,500 participating young people and young adults is low. 8% of participants have no school qualifications and no further education, a further 8% broke off their education or training prematurely, 17% have only very few qualifications, and only 8% have good to excellent qualifications.

These problems are accompanied by other particular situations in the lives of the participants. 16% of the young participants have children, 9% are supporting a person in need in their social group and about 15% are disabled. 17% of participants have experience of homelessness and 18% of young people have already committed a criminal offence.

The aim of introducing the job market project Talent Match to a youth organisation is to gain special access to the target group of young people and young adults who are difficult to integrate into the job market. The target group find their way to the youth centres of London Youth, to meet friends and to make the most sensible use of their free time. Here young people also get straightforward and unofficial help and advice about applying for social services or about other problems in their lives. They get to know the staff of the organisation in a familiar and trusting environment. A big advantage of Talent Match’s work with young people is that it is possible not only to build up a strong trusting relationship but also a special understanding of the living conditions, and the strengths and weaknesses of the participants.



The aim of the project is to bring the young people and young adults taking part closer to the job market and then to integrate them into the general job market. Each young person is given a “talent plan” at the beginning, i.e. an action plan for his/her development (Journey of Change). Here it is important not only to get the young people into training or education, i.e. to overcome their lack of formal qualifications, but also to introduce them to what is going on in the job market. Contact with potential employers has had a big effect on this process. It is essential that the skills required by employers are met not only formally or informally by the participants but also that the latter are interpreted correctly by the participants. The discrepancy between what the participants day-to-day verbally and physically experience and what is required by the job market in the form of skills is significant. Contact with employers could break down this language barrier, increase the self-confidence of the participants, increase trust in their abilities and potential and make them more relatable with respect to the job market. There is a similar problem with the career aspirations of participants. At the beginning the young people involved mainly want to go in a direction familiar to them. Thus 51% would like a career in retail, i.e. sales, and 34% in youth work and education. The fields of IT at 16% and finance at 18% score lower. Contact with employers here could also change the young people’s perceptions.

Contact with employers takes place at different levels at Talent Match. As part of Talent Match employers offer young people the chance to spend a day at their company to give them an idea about possible career choices that they were previously unaware of (Explore). There are also two six week placements where young people can gain work experience, get a better idea of what it is like, and test and develop their skills in a real working environment (Focus). The third stage involves employment or an apprenticeship in a participating company (Achieve). In addition, the young people organise events to which companies are invited to introduce their work and build contacts with young people. These events generate work placements and some of the young people have been brave enough to enter into self-employment. The coaching at Talent Match also continues in parallel to taking up employment. The qualifications of young people are continually checked and adjusted if necessary.

As a result of Talent Match, 25% of the young people taking part found work which lasted at least 6 months –60% of which remained in employment beyond six months.



Talent Match measures its success by means of “peer evaluation”. Here the effect of the program on changes made by the young people during the process in the area of emotional social behaviour is measured. The parameters for this are defined in the theory of change of the program. As process, it is considered to be the best possible and most efficient way of meeting the defined aims of the theory of change. The effect and the process of the program are determined by means of a questionnaire and recorded in a separate database. This questionnaire is sent out and answered at the beginning, then every six months and then two years after the participants have begun employment. A knowledge management system has been set up for processing the recorded responses which then evaluates the data and examines its effectiveness.

The effectiveness of the program is measured in the context of the following questions:

- › How many, previously not registered young people and young adults have found their way to Talent Match?
- › Have the young people been integrated into work or are they on the way to self-employment?
- › How many young people remain in employment for more than six months?
- › How many young people are making progress with their qualifications, education or training?
- › How many young people enter voluntary work through Talent Match?
- › How many young people receive peer mentoring?
- › How many young people do work placements?
- › What changes in emotional and social behaviour have there been by the end of the program?



The process is measured using the following questionnaire:

- › What challenges have to be addressed to get young people into training, a job or self-employment?
- › What works and what does not work when dealing with different groups of young people?
- › How important is personalised 1:1 support for successfully providing help towards better job opportunities?
- › What characteristics do young people who are not in work have and why are they not in work?

- › What resources are needed to prepare employers to support young people?
- › How important are qualifications in young peoples' Journey of Change?

In order to measure the effect and the process, various tools are used such as the said questionnaires, as well as reports from appointments and meetings, and results of interviews.

Following the talk by *Ms Taylor*, comparisons were drawn with the German project called “Disco-Youth” (Disconnected Youth) and somebody asked about the drop-out rate for the “Talent Match” scheme. *Steph Taylor* reported that the drop-out rate was 30% but said that it was difficult to define exactly what was meant by “dropping out” because the scheme organisers continued to survey participants for two years afterwards.

Therefore, participation in the scheme could end up bearing fruit further down the line. Someone else then brought up the new “Respect” programme, a federally run project for “educationally disadvantaged” youth. Many of the participants in this programme lack a basic education and do not have any school-leaving certificates to their name. In light of this, people were interested to know whether the young people participating in “Talent Match” were being integrated into the education system. *Steph Taylor* confirmed that efforts were being made to get those involved in the “Talent Match” scheme to resume and complete their school

education. However, she pointed out that it was important to build up the young people's self-confidence first. This was usually achieved through work-related qualifications because most of the young people did not want to be sent straight back to school. Within this context, priority was given to the concerns of the participants themselves with a view to getting them interested in finishing their school education and catching up on the qualifications they had missed out on. Another question aimed at *Ms Taylor* concerned the age of the participants. The delegate wanted to know whether a participant would no longer be allowed to take part in the project on reaching his or her 25th birthday and how he or she would be passed on to other agencies. *Steph Taylor* stressed that the project did not suddenly come to an end as soon as someone turned 25, but only once a successful outcome had been achieved. It was just that people could only join the project in the first place if they were under 25.

Discussion of European coaching approaches and concluding discussion

The host introduced the final discussion about European coaching approaches and the general concluding discussion by asking what “journey of change” meant for the different groups of service users. He also encouraged the delegates to discuss the kinds of change processes that could be supported through coaching and how the various change processes worked. One participant in the discussion broadened these questions by introducing the idea of barriers and the steps that were required to eliminate them more effectively.

On the one hand, it was claimed that the current job market in Germany provided the ideal context for coaching. However, on the other hand, Germany was also subject to a specific set of structural conditions that could pose difficulties for coaches. Another topic raised was the possibility of a coachee becoming dependent on a coach. In the case of the London scheme, that is precisely why so much attention was being devoted to building up the self-confidence of the teenagers and young adults first. And it was also important to ensure that the young people had relationships with other adults. Someone else stressed that the close relationship with the coaches or mediators was very important, particularly during the initial phase of the coaching process—in order to get things moving and help improve the client’s self-confidence. However, the 1:1 scenario was not the only key factor because it was also important for participants to get to know others in the same situation as themselves.

Someone said that coaching did not always have to be delivered by the same person necessarily, but could involve handing the coachee over at certain interface points, although – admittedly – this called for good communication. Handover could indeed form part of the coaching process and be carried out in a structured manner. Another delegate backed this argument up by saying that a change of coach was essential once a certain point in the process was reached. However, it was best to avoid a change of coach in the upstream coaching phase before the participant had started work and in the downstream coaching phase afterwards.

Speaking from the perspective of Berlin, someone pointed out that the city’s youth employment agencies were a good example of how certain basic data should be kept available so that it could be referred to repeatedly if there were multiple coaches. However, efforts still had to be made to ensure proper data ownership.



The issue of what constituted a “sensible” mentoring intensity was raised again—with the delegate concerned making reference to two of the programmes that had been presented in the course of the day. They mentioned the client contact rate of three times per week that had been adopted during the federal programme for the long-term employed and compared this with the rate of at least once a month for the Berlin job coaching scheme. They also highlighted the discrepancies between the suggested mentoring ratios of 1:40, 1:20 and 1:100, and asked which one was correct. One of the delegates asserted that employability schemes were not the only context in which workplace-based coaching could be offered. Instead, it could be provided in parallel with work placements at actual companies. The advantage of this was the greater proximity to the companies. Somebody also pointed out that coaching could be offered while people were unemployed without providing them with a parallel job. To avoid creaming effects, it was asserted that the recipients of the coaching should be those furthest from the job market.

Another delegate stated that the coaching period could be shortened if an empathetic working relationship had developed. Rather than calculating requirements on the basis of fixed ratios, a pragmatic approach should be adopted instead. Another delegate cited an example from family coaching projects for the unemployed where participants were not employed in parallel with the coaching. Here, contact took place twice a week with a mentoring ratio of no more than 1:30 for people without children and no more than 1:20 in the case of families. This service was financed by a lump-sum grant. Someone mentioned an example from North Rhine-Westphalia, where the mentoring ratio was 1:20 and the coachees were already in receipt of social pedagogical support. This prompted a question about what constituted the right amount of mentoring from the perspective of the participants.

In this case, the participants had been asked whether they had actually received the level of coaching they needed. This method—namely including the perspective of the participants—also makes it possible to check or assess the “quality” of the coaching.

Conclusion



Boris Velter, State Secretary in Berlin's Senate Department for Labour, Integration and Women's Affairs, stressed how keen Berlin was for the exchange of ideas and experience to continue

The event was brought to a close by *Boris Velter, State Secretary at Berlin's Senate Department for Labour, Integration and Women's Affairs*. He stressed how keen everyone in Berlin was for the work to continue in terms of swapping ideas and experience, learning from each other and working together on projects. He said that it was often difficult to make enough time for this in the world of politics, but that Berlin was continuously engaged in international conversations, including—in particular—in the areas of job coaching and research into effectiveness. He believed that the process of sharing ideas and experience would help Berlin to make significant advances precisely because it was taking place continuously and also because representatives from the administrative departments were involved and so would take the findings back with them into their everyday work.

He promised that the results of the discussions would be fed into the government's work. *Boris Velter* then finished by thanking all the speakers, and expressing his gratitude to *Professor Matthias Knuth* for acting as host and to everyone else for getting involved.

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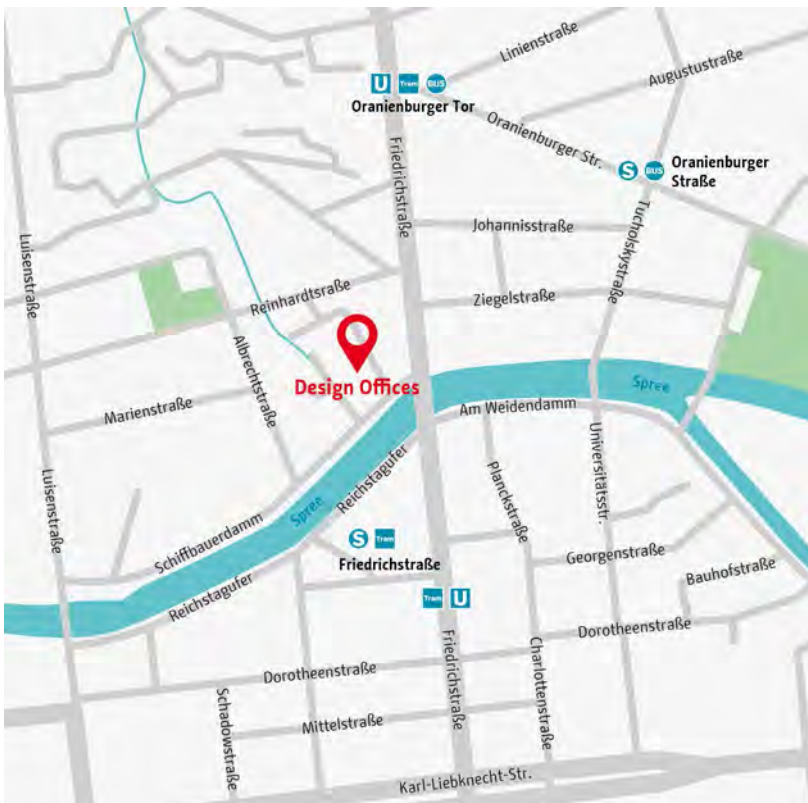
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Photographer: Thomas Trutschel

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