



Free Hanseatic City of Bremen: Three examples for a cross-cutting approach in youth policy

The Free Hanseatic City of Bremen is a two-city-state in northern Germany with in total 660.000 inhabitants. It is the smallest German region with a strong economy. However, the unemployment rates are, compared with the German average, relatively high. Focusing on the youth unemployment, Bremen has 9,6% while in the German average only 5,4 % of the young people have problems finding their way (from education) into work.

To help young people to have a smooth transition from school to work local authorities and their partners have a broad set of different measures to their disposal. There are employment services in cooperation with Chambers, Employers, there are all kinds of different schools (formal education) and there is youth work (non-formal education) – just to name the big ones. All of them have their own unique approaches. But what is the right mix of methods and instruments to give guidance to the young people?

For the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen it is evident, that there has to be a cross-cutting approach, using all the different kinds of competences, addressing the young people as early and as individual as possible. Therefore all players from different policy areas (ministries, organizations, chambers and civil society) work very close together. And the partners do all this, taking into account the European level as well, such as the EU Youth Guarantee¹ and the EU-Youth Strategy².

Three examples:

1. Implementation of the EU Youth Guarantee Scheme

Even though Bremen is not a beneficiary of the youth employment initiative, an apprenticeship guarantee and the new concept of a one-stop-shop (“Jugendberufsagentur”) had been set up in early 2015. Basically the apprenticeship guarantee renewed the commitment between the chambers and the involved authorities (education, youth, employment and economy) and since then is promising every young person, leaving school, an apprenticeship measure. Therefore the public budget for had been raised. Furthermore the youth employment agency targets all young people till the age of 25. Under this new structure all consulting services (youth work, employment agency, and education) are centered and optimized for the benefit of the youth.

2. Youth Work Concept

To strengthen the youth work, the City of Bremen renewed her Youth Work Concept, taking into account, that non-formal learning through youth work gives important guidance for young people. The realities of young people are often district-based, that’s why the concept is designed by a consequentially decentralized and district-based approach. The budget for the youth work had been recently raised to carry out this new task ambitiously. Two areas from the EU Youth Strategy (participation and social inclusion) play a major role in this concept, what had been recognized by the European Commission in their youth report 2015 as a good practice.³

3. European Youth Strategy for the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen

In 2015 the Senate set up this Youth Strategy including several measures and networks to raise interest for young people in European politics; to help young people to recognize the EU as their living environment; to improve their skills and competences to take advantage of the mobility within the EU; and to improve their participation in European issues (on European and local level). All core elements of this strategy are realized together with all involved partners which supports a good exchange.

1 European Commission, EU Youth Guarantee, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079>

2 European Commission, EU Youth Strategy, http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/index_en.htm

3 European Commission, SWD (2015) 168 final, Results of the open method of coordination in the youth field, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015SC0168&from=EN>, p. 15

