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The Transition from School to the Workplace for Students with Learning Disabilities

Status Quo and the Efficiency of Pre-Vocational and Vocational Training Schemes

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Abstract:

This article is concerned with the transition from school to the workplace for pupils with special educational needs in Germany. First, an outline of the standard system of professional training in Germany shall be given. Then, the initial conditions that adolescents are confronted with at the end of their time in school shall be examined. This review will then focus on studies and surveys of students with special educational needs who have graduated from school in Germany.

It quickly becomes apparent that, after school, adolescents with Special Educational Needs (SEN) most times visited a one-year school-based pre-vocational programme, and afterwards a state-funded school-based vocational programme; therefore the standard German dual-educational apprenticeship system generally doesn't apply. Looking at segregated school-based vocational training for students with SEN, it can be observed that the placement rate into the general labour market is not sufficient. Inclusive models play a minor role here, even if the analyses at hand suggest promising perspectives.

Key words:

transition from school to workplace in Germany, pre-vocational training, vocational training, supported employment, Special Needs, learning disability,

1. Introduction

The German dual system was once considered one of the world's best systems, as it gave many adolescents a vocational qualification alongside their education, and provided the economy with a large reserve of skilled workers (Baethge 2007). Yet, due to the strict separation of vocational and general education, problems concerning the transition from school to the workplace have become evident.

Not all applicants are able to find an apprenticeship training position in the free economy, as the demands on applicants have risen in various occupations. The result is a change where only the best applicants are able to obtain an apprenticeship and adolescents with low academic qualifications (Baethge 2007) and/or immigrant backgrounds (Imdorf 2005) do not succeed in finding apprenticeship positions. Pupils with special needs or adolescents leaving *Hauptschule* (secondary school) after the ninth grade without graduating are especially at risk. The question arises as to which support schemes would be appropriate for these adolescents to facilitate their entry into vocational life. Although some German-speaking publications concerned with this subject do exist, intensive database research has demonstrated that there are almost no international English-language publications on the subject as it relates to Germany. Therefore, this article aims to shed some light on the vocational entry and educational system in Germany and, by means of selected surveys, to depict the path of disadvantaged adolescents - particularly of those who attend learning support – mostly in special schools.

These young people are described in Germany with the term "Förderbedarf Lernen" or by the term "Lernbehinderung". Since there is no clear equivalent in English (Werning and Lütje-Klose 2003), the term will be translated as "learning disability (LD)", despite slight differences in meaning. The associated problems are described by Schröder (2002). For this reason, we will explain more accurately to which group the term refers. LD describes all students who attend a school for learning support (Bleidick 1989) or are impaired in their

learning and performance development to such a degree that they need special education support (Heimlich, 2009). In Germany, this Group includes 2.7% of all students and 46.44% of all students with special educational needs (Geiling and Theunissen 2009).

Attempts to define human characteristics for the diagnosis of learning disability hardly seem to reflect reality. Rather, the following facts arise (Geiling and Theunissen 2009):

According to international definitions, 30% of these students are referred to as mentally handicapped and 15% of these students have average intelligence. 19.4%, twice as many as in mainstream schools, have a migration background and about 60% are male. Furthermore, it should be noted that about 80 to 90% come from a disadvantaged social background (Kottke, 2006), although many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds attend the regular “Hauptschule” (Geiling and Theunissen 2009). Overall, pupils with learning disability constitute a special group of disadvantaged young people, namely those who have already been receiving special support in school. As used in scientific practice, social disadvantage means, in this context, the occurrence of multiple family risk factors such as poverty, unemployment, low education level of parents, etc. Here, the term “disadvantaged young people” is taken to be less complex, similar to how the term is used in studies about the transition from school to work. Thus, in this article, “social disadvantage” describes the definition by the law. In accordance with law, young people who are affected by a lack of prospects to enter vocational training are considered to be disadvantaged (Sozialgesetzbuch III, § 242 clause 1). Since they are legally entitled to training schemes, all adolescents who get special support after school are described as social disadvantaged.

For this publication, research was conducted that included all empirical analyses collected in German-speaking databases, including FIS Bildung, BIGOS and SoLi through the years 2000-2010. Due to different group classifications, the different statistics and databases are, unfortunately, oftentimes incompatible, even if they originate from official vocational and education statistics. Also, studies on the transition from school to the workplace are seldom

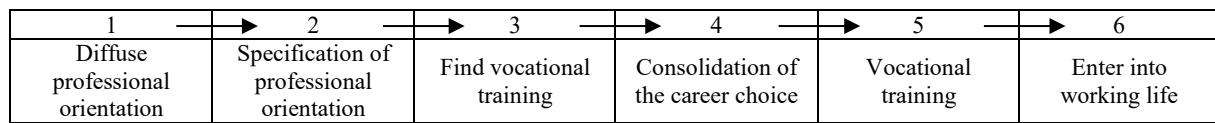
available (Baethge and Wieck 2006). In most statistics, students leaving special schools are subsumed under the categories of 'pupils without Hauptschulabschluss (Certificate of Secondary Education)' or 'pupils with Hauptschulabschluss (Certificate of Secondary Education)'; hence only limited concrete conclusions can be reached (Basendowski and Werner 2010).

2. Vocational Education in Germany

Early career entry in Germany is marked by the dual system, which is characterized by the combined apprenticeship education offered by schools and businesses (Pätzold 2004). In most cases, apprentices spend one day per week in vocational schools and the other days in their training companies. All training is systematized on a national level and specified through occupational profiles and qualification profiles, so that there are quality standards available for the companies. In some vocations, schooling takes place in uninterrupted block periods, followed by uninterrupted periods of work. Vocational education is regulated by the Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz - BBiG) and the Crafts and Trades Regulation Code (Handwerksordnung - HwO). Vocational qualifications are awarded by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Industrie- und Handelskammer - IHK), an independent authority (Biermann 2008). Depending on the respective vocation, training usually takes three years, but if the apprentice performs well, can often be shortened. This educational system is frequently regarded as a decided competitive advantage of the German economy, and is time and again mentioned in connection to the success of Germany's economy on the international stage (Baethge and Wieck 2006).

The model “phases of vocational choice” according to Herzog, Neuenschwander and Wannack (2006), as shown in graph 1, can be used as a theoretical framework. The model explains the process of career choice as a development task, thus it is based on ideas by Havighurst. An educational framework for how this model could be taken up in the school

context to offer career support is constituted by “Bildungsgangdidaktik”. Also, it builds on Havighurst and finds broad attention in Germany (Meyer 2008; Hericks 2006).



Graph 1: The model “phases of vocational choice” of Herzog, Neuenschwander and Wannack (2006)

Statutorily, the primary aim is that students with SEN are able to take up recognized occupations (§ 64 BBiG). However, up-to-date studies (Gaup and Geier 2010; Gaup, Großkurth and Lex 2010), show that it is very difficult for these individuals to obtain an apprentice position and see it through.

One reason for the difficulties of students with SEN is that the annual number of applicants in Germany seeking a vocational training post is rising continually. This is compounded by unsuccessful applicants from the year before who are re-applying, adding to the new applicant pool (Antoni, Dietrich, Jungkunst, Matthes and Pflicht 2007). Only 252,181 adolescents – or 47.28 % of the total number of applicants – were able to find an apprenticeship training position in 2009 (Federal Ministry of Education and Research 2010). This implies that more than half of the applicants could not find a corresponding apprenticeship. The following can thus be seen: not all adolescents can meet the demands made by the qualification process and by the companies (Pätzold 2004). There is also a crowding-out effect that is beginning to show among the training positions that are allocated. Thus, school graduates with lower grades only fill a third of all apprenticeship training places (Pätzold 2004). Depending on the survey, between 5% and 10% of the graduates of special schools find their way directly into an apprenticeship immediately after leaving school (Gaupp and Geier 2008).

This is especially problematic, because it is the period right after leaving school that is regarded as setting the course for career development (Ulrich 2004). Under-performing graduates are in danger of having to face a lack of perspectives and uncertainty, as well as

long-term vocational and social exclusion (Galuske 1998). Those without a chance of completing a recognized training programme according to the § 4 Vocational Training Act (BBiG) have the ability to apply for a theory-reduced training programme with special arrangements for disabled people, according to § 66 BBiG (Werker- bzw. theoriereduzierte Ausbildung) (Biermann 2008). The need for individual special education is assigned by the Federal Employment Agency; here, previous assessments performed by schools is not considered binding. This takes into account that the allocation of special needs is determined by regional factors and many more factors independent of the student (Ginnold 2009; Doose 2007b).

Theory-reduced apprenticeships are for the so-called Werkerberufe (trade occupations), and are in fact only for assistant roles to the full-fledged trades. For example, Werkerberufe include assistant housekeepers, assistant gardeners, assistant painters, and assistant carpenters (Federal Ministry of Education and Research 2007). Adolescents who are unable to get an apprenticeship receive *pre-vocational training* to improve preparedness for the workplace. These programmes last one year, with the intention of increasing the student's interest in a particular field, and providing them with some of the general vocational skills needed to get into that field. The aim of these programmes is to attain a standard apprenticeship after the one-year programme. The offers of Werkerberufe (trades) and supportive measures are mostly used by teenagers with learning disability and teenagers who attended secondary school without passing their qualification exams, thus failing to graduate. Adolescents with profound mental or physical disabilities often start working at a segregated state-sponsored workplace. Recently, measures with the aim of finding employment for disabled people in the general labour market have been paid greater attention (Hinz and Boban 2001; Doose 2007a). Overall, it can be observed that the vocational training alternatives for adolescents with disabilities vary significantly from region to region (Ginnold and Radatz 2000; Ginnold 2009).

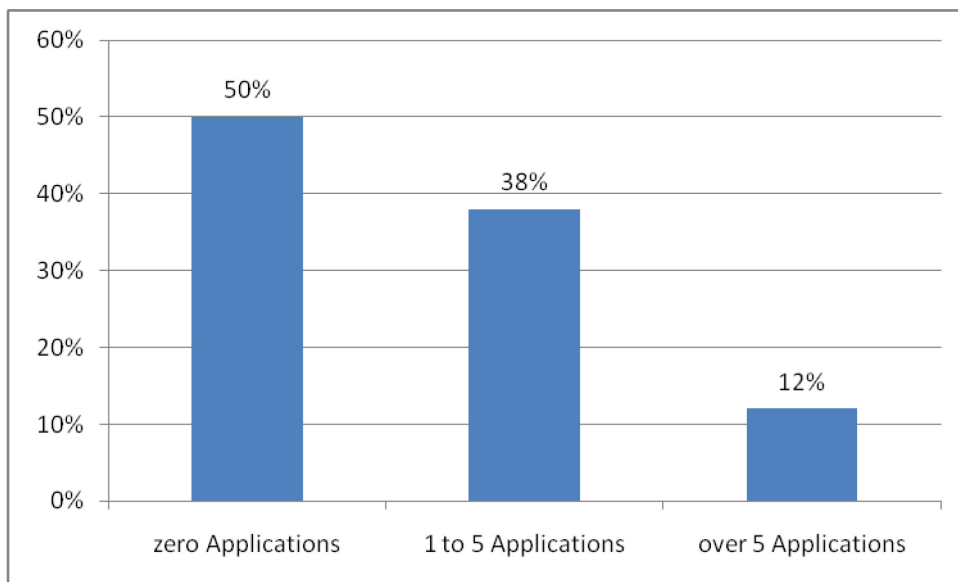
3. The Transitional Phase from School to the Workplace

The number of adolescents who have not been able to find apprenticeships has steeply increased in recent years. At present, there are as many new entrants in state-funded pre-vocational programmes as there are in the standard dual system with regular apprenticeships (Baethge and Wieck 2006).

It can be observed that in the transitional phase from school to the workplace, male adolescents with a foreign background have especially lower chances of finding apprenticeships in comparison to adolescents of German descent (Solga 2003). As this occurs even when controlled for occupational choice, graduate status, and native language, this can therefore be traced back to discriminatory tendencies (Diehl, Friedrich and Hall 2009; Beicht and Granato 2009). Such adolescents are over-represented at special schools for children with learning disabilities (LD). All adolescents with LD get more comprehensive and systematic support at special schools than they would at other kinds of schools (Gaupp, Großkurth and Lex 2008).

Adolescents with LD are aware of the competition with their peers and have, as compared to their peers, lower aspirations with regards to the prestige level of their future occupations (Sahli, Eckhart and Blanc 2009). Furthermore, they are aware of the fact that they have reduced chances of finding an apprenticeship, and therefore accept the offer of participating in pre-vocational training schemes in most cases (Gaupp and Geier 2008; Gaupp, Großkurth and Lex 2008), which are arranged for them by the state employment agency or their teachers. Only 10% have looked for such a programme without such assistance (Gaupp and Geier 2008). Application success rates for apprenticeships are very low for all pupils with learning disabilities. This is due to difficult market conditions for training positions (Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2007), but also to those pupils' lack of skills and unrealistic vocational preferences (Pfriem and Moosecker 2004; Gaupp, Großkurth and Lex 2008).

A survey by Gebhardt (2009) provides more insight into the failure of students with LD in getting apprenticeships. 91 students with LD from ten special schools in Munich were queried, and only 12 out of the 91 (13.2%) qualified for dual-education apprenticeships, whilst 70 (76.93%) took part in pre-vocational training schemes. Gebhardt's survey results also suggest that the lack of apprenticeship success could lie within the students' application tendencies. As shown in graph 2, application tendencies were rather passive, thus replicating the results of former studies (Pfriem and Moosecker 2004). 45 adolescents had not submitted a single application, even though it was compulsory according to the state-controlled curriculum.



Graph 2: Applications of pupils with learning disabilities in Munich (Gebhardt 2009)

4. Pre-Vocational and Vocational Training Schemes in Germany

40% of adolescents are not caught up by this close-meshed net of vocational rehabilitation, and react with school absenteeism. Therefore, they do not benefit from pre-vocational training schemes at all (Graser 2009; Heimlich 2009). Another danger of such schemes exists in so-called 'training programme careers' (Grünke and Leidig 2007), where students continue to attend special training programmes one after the other, but get no closer to an apprenticeship, and ultimately end up unemployed. According to a survey by Ginnold conducted in Berlin

(2008; 2009), adolescents remained in pre-vocational training for between 36 and 48 months before beginning an apprenticeship. Surveys on the benefit of different pre-vocational measures, however, are extremely rare (Grünke and Leidig 2007). Lex (1997) criticises the lack of long-term studies on the transition from school to the workplace in the Federal Republic of Germany.

There are essentially two kinds of pre-vocational and vocational training schemes (Heimlich 2003):

- So-called indirect schemes are school-based, where theoretical skills as well as a school report are acquired up front, and employment is sought afterwards.
- On the other hand, direct integration schemes involve seeking work first, and developing the employee's skills on the job. This approach is described by the term 'supported employment' and originates from an orientation on concepts from the USA (Rusch 1990).

“Lebensproblemzentrierte Pädagogik” [Life problem-centred education] (Westphal 1976; Wachtel and Wittrock 2001) can be used as a theoretical framework of this support system. With this model, the support and the independent development of adolescents can be described on a continuum. Thus, the transition from school to work would be characterised by a high level of support by the Federal Employment Agency. The adolescents are diagnosed and mapped into different schemes and state-sponsored vocational trainings. Initiative and flexibility, as well as application behaviour will not be trained by this. Based on “Lebensproblemzentrierte Pädagogik”, building up the youth’s self-efficacy and a realistic locus of control would be important. Especially in the sense of resilience (Werner and Smith 1982; Grünke 2003; Gebhardt 2009), it is particularly important and therefore significant for the future working life.

5. Indirect Vocational Integration Schemes

Indirect schemes are school-based programmes. They serve for the adolescents' further qualification in the event that they have not found apprenticeships. The programmes financed by the Federal Employment Agency – for example, local rehabilitation, vocational training in external institutions, or vocational training centres – in most cases allow for external vocational training and potentially also theory-reduced training for particular vocations. School-based programmes, like Berufseinstiegsjahr (BEJ), Berufsvorbereitende Bildungsmaßnahme (BvB), Berufsvorbereitendes Jahr (BVJ) and other forms, vary only slightly for the most part, and usually figure in surveys under the umbrella term 'Berufsvorbereitendes Jahr (BVJ)' (Gaupp and Geier 2008). They are primarily utilised by pupils with learning difficulties, other disabilities, or by adolescents without a Certificate of Secondary Education; sporadically, graduates of Realschulen (intermediate secondary schools) and other secondary schools who have not been able to obtain apprenticeships can be found there as well. In spite of closer attention to integration measures, the number of adolescents in a pre-vocational training year has remained stable nationwide at over 70,000 (Federal Ministry of Education and Research 2010). It can be ascertained, however, that adolescents without high school diplomas have significant difficulties finding regular training positions even after benefiting from support schemes in comparison to adolescents with high school diplomas (Gaupp, Lex and Reißig 2008; Bertschy, Böni and Meyer 2007; Weil and Lauterbach 2009). As a rule, pre-vocational training schemes enable adolescents to acquire a Certificate of Secondary Education later on through technical lessons oriented toward the secondary school curriculum. Within these schemes, the certificate is acquired by most adolescents, including adolescents with learning disabilities (Tretter, Spindler and Gebhardt 2011; Brinkmann et al. 2008).

The number of pupils participating in pre-vocational training schemes is astounding, as they have been generally criticized (Bickmann and Enghuber, 2001). Thus it might be said that pre-vocational training, for example the Berufsvorbereitende Jahr (BVJ), rarely makes a

significant contribution to students' integration into the labour market (Soriano 2002; 2006; Biermann 2008; Schlimbach 2009). The placement rate of pre-vocational preparation schemes, as quoted in the literature, lies at under 50 % (Kuhn, Baethge, Fend, Hinz, Kuhn and Löhrmann 2008), and is usually between 30 % and 40% (Schumann 2007). The proportion of pupils with learning disabilities in those pre-vocational programmes is very high, since about 80% of graduates of schools for special needs utilize these schemes (Gebhardt 2009; Basendowski and Werner 2010; Gaupp and Geier 2010).

An exact analysis of the existing surveys that include pre-vocational preparation schemes can be found in Table 1. The different conditions in those empirical studies, however, permit only a small level of comparability and do not permit the application of further analytical methods – for example, a meta analysis – on the existing data. While in some surveys, graduates of Realschulen (intermediate secondary schools) also participated in the pre-vocational preparation schemes (Brickmann and Enggruber 2001; Kuhn et al. 2008), starting conditions for adolescents in other surveys were much worse. In addition, both the unemployment rate and the number of businesses in a position to take on apprenticeships differ greatly from region to region. Besides the different starting conditions due to the region indicated or to the conditions of the adolescents taking part in the respective programmes, some longitudinal results can be explained by referencing a changing sample. For better comparability, however, the percentage should always refer to the total sample in the beginning of the programme (Tretter, Spindler and Gebhardt 2011). The surveys carried out by the DJI in particular, work out the longitudinal section solely on the basis of data originating from the whole period.

Authorress	Survey	Sample, Date, Region	Method	Appren- ticeship
Reißig, Gaupp, Hofmann-Lun and Lex 2006, DJI-panel	Pre-vocational measure after one year out of school by Highschool students	n = 448, Nov. 2004 - Nov. 2005, Bavaria	Longitudinal survey (Sample of all students 2004, N = 3900)	35 %
Gaupp, Lex, Reißig and Braun 2008, DJI-panel	Pre-vocational measure after one year out of school by Highschool students	n = 377, Nov. 2004 - Nov. 2007, Bavaria	Longitudinal survey (Sample of all students 2004, N = 3900)	59 %
Gaupp, Lex and Reißig 2008, DJI-panel	Students out of school, without graduing, educated in a special vocational setting at school (“Praxisklasse”)	N = 208 Nov. 2004 -Nov. 2006, Bavaria	Longitudinal survey (Sample of all students 2004, N = 3900)	62 %
Gaupp and Geier 2010, DJI-panel	Graduates of School (Hauptschule)	N=560, March 2007-Nov. 2009, Stuttgart	Longitudinal survey (Sample of all students 2007, N = 1102)	42 %
Hiller and Friedmann 1997	Graduates of the pre-vocational measure without graduing at highschool	N = 20, 1992/93 -1993/94, Reutlingen	Cross-sectional study after the pre-vocational measure	15%
Baur 1999	Graduates of the pre-vocational measure with and without graduing at highschool (female only)	N = 20; 1993/94, Hannover and Osnabrück	Cross-sectional study after the pre-vocational measure	20%
Schumann 2003	Graduates of specialschool with LD	N = 28, 1988 – 2001, Bremen	Longitudinal survey	0 %
Bickmann and Enggruber 2001	Graduates of the pre-vocational measure with and without graduing at highschool	N = 44, 1995/96; Hannover	Cross-sectional study after the pre-vocational measure	39%
Brinkmann et al. 2008	Graduates of the pre-vocational measure with LD	N = 129, 2008, Baden-Württemberg	Cross-sectional study after the pre-vocational measure	30 %
Brinkmann et al. 2008	Graduates of the pre-vocational measure with LD	N = 34, 2008, in Baden-Württemberg	Cross-sectional study after the pre-vocational measure	18 %
Basendowski and Werner 2010, BEWEMAKO	Graduates of specialschools with LD, who were 18 years old	N = 412, July 2008, Februar 2009, Baden-Württemberg	Cross-sectional study	9,9%
Gaupp and Geier 2010, DJI-panel	Graduates of specialschools with LD	N=47, März 2007 - Nov. 2009, Stuttgart,	Longitudinal survey (Sample of students 2007, N = 144)	12,8%
Tretter, Spindler and Gebhardt 2011	Graduates with and without LD of the pre-vocational maesure without graduing at highschool	N = 26, September 2007- Februar 2010, Bad Tölz (Bavaria)	Longitudinal survey	42 %

Table 1: Surveys of students getting apprenticeships after graduation from secondary school (white) and from special education schools (gray)

The results of these surveys bear relevance to the problem at hand. At the DJI Panel, the development process of Hauptschule (secondary school) graduates was the most stable. Of all those who were in a pre-vocational training programme in November 2004, only 35% had started apprenticeships after one year (Reißig et al. 2006). Of these adolescents, 90% successfully completed their apprenticeship. In reference to the placement rate, pupils from practice-based classes (Praxis Klassen) from Hauptschulen particularly stand out with 62%

entering apprenticeships (Gaupp, Lex and Reißig 2008). These special practice-based classes utilise a concept that has a strong emphasis on employment placement. More teacher hours and the assistance of a social worker allow for better support, and more supervised internships are possible during school hours. The disadvantage is that young people do not obtain a qualified secondary school diploma. The students of these special classes don't have SEN, but they are still at risk to fail the regular secondary school qualification exam.

The studies show that graduates of special schools have a small placement rate into dual-education apprenticeships as opposed to graduates of Hauptschulen (secondary schools). Hence, pupils of special schools were placed into pre-vocational training institutions more often (Gaupp and Geier 2010). Basendowski and Werner (2010) came to the same result in their cross-sectional survey of 18-year-old students with learning disability (N=519) in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

79.3% of the students in the study enrolled in pre-vocational training and only 9.9% for dual-education apprenticeships. Of the 519 students, 96 completed their vocational training; 34 of them worked in the profession they learned and 62 of them went on to work in another profession. The problem for the 62 students going on to professions different from the one they trained in is that they enter those fields without any qualification, and are thus confined to menial roles. The following professions were the most common pursued for vocational training programmes: Warehouse operator (11.4 %), gardener (11.4 %), carpenter (10.2 %), hotel and restaurant worker (9.1 %), chef assistant (6.8 %), construction worker (6.8 %), metal worker (4.6 %) and salesperson (4.6 %). Altogether, 64.8% of the students in the survey chose from one of these professions. In another study Gaupp and Geier (2010) also discovered a difference in sex. The favourite occupation of females was domestic helper while most males wanted to be painters.

In follow-up studies of the Bremen longitudinal study (conducted from 1988 to 2001) by Schumann (2003), 424 students were investigated in total, with none of the 28 special school graduates successfully establishing themselves with a qualified degree (Grobbin, Prein, Reyyels and Seus 2003), despite initially taking part in pre-vocational training programmes (Ehret, Othild and Schumann, 2003). The results of the Schuman (2003) study were quite different compared to a follow-up study by Tretter, Spindler and Gebhardt (2011), which showed that after 1.5 years, 27% out of 26 investigated adolescents with learning disabilities or without secondary school certificates were in the same apprenticeship they had started after pre-vocational programmes.

The most important results concerning people out of school in Germany can be gathered from the longitudinal studies of the German Youth Institute (DJI), which will be shown in more detail in the following table. The surveys were conducted in the cities of Stuttgart and Munich. For Stuttgart, results from the last year at school are available from March 2007 to November 2009. The study in Munich started one year later, and only interim reports are available. Interviews were conducted at each interval of the study. The dropout rate in both studies was quite high: in Stuttgart, 53% of students dropped out from March 2007 to November 2009; in Munich, 24% of students dropped out between March 2007 and November 2008. These dropout rates were comparable to the dropout rate of 50% among regular secondary school pupils (Gaupp and Geier 2010). After school, most special school pupils participated in pre-vocational programmes: 83% in Stuttgart (first inquiry) and 72.3 % in Munich. Pre-vocational training programmes end after one year, which is why the percentage of pupils in pre-vocational training programmes drops to 2% for Stuttgart's participants in November. As a consequence, only a few pupils are placed in further programmes; a 'training programme career' is thus rather rare.

The majority of adolescents are placed in a state-funded vocational scheme at the end of the first transitional year. In this establishment, adolescents acquire their vocational education

within three years. For this reason, the proportion of this form of training has risen to 52% (N=25) according to the last inquiry from November 2009. Most graduates attended a theory-reduced training course; few were able to successfully complete the full training. The unemployment rate amounted to 15% in the last inquiry. In the middle of the inquiries, it amounted to 37% for one month, and then dropped rapidly. The employment agency seems to quickly place adolescents with learning disabilities into a scheme. It can be assumed that in doing so, the employment agency ensures that those adolescents no longer figure in the unemployment statistic, as they are 'provided for' by a scheme.

	Phase	Time	Sample (female, male, migration)	Apprentice (dual- education)	Statefunded vocational measure	Pre- vocational measure	Unem- ployment
Stuttgart	Confirmation of Participation in School	March 2007 (vocational choice)	N= 100 (100%) (n=34; n=66; n=64)	N=11 (15%)	-	N=42 (56%)	-
	First Wave	Nov 2007	N= 76 (100%) (n=30; n=40; n=52)	N=4 (5%)	-	N=66 (85%)	N=1 (1%)
	Third Wave	Nov 2009	N= 47 (100%) (n=18; n=29; n=28)	N=6 (12,8%)	N = 27 (57,5%)	N=1 (2,1%)	N=7 (15%)
München	Confirmation of Participation in School	March 2007 (vocational choice)	N= 86 (100%) (n=36; n=50; n=59)	N=32 (27,6%)	-	N=47 (40,5%)	-
	First Wave	Nov 2008	N= 65 (100%) (n=26; n= 36; n=41)	N=5 (7,7%)	-	N=47 (72,3%)	-

Table 2: Outcomes of the DJI-panels in Stuttgart and Munich by adolescents with learning disability

5. Integrative or Direct Vocational Integration Schemes

Individual and ambulant accompaniment is supposed to shorten the transitional phase from school to the workplace, thus leading to significantly more on-the-job training (Ginnold, 2008). Here, adolescents work in local companies, supervised by external supervisors and trainers ('job coaching') (Heimlich 2003). The corresponding legal basis can be found in SozialgesetzbuchSGB IX (SocialRegister Act), which states that adolescents with disabilities can be supported in occupational orientations and vocational counselling by integration services (SGB IX, § 110). Currently, people with mental disabilities are especially affected by

this regulation (Wendt 2008). This task is commonly institutionalised via integration services that operate locally and are established nationwide. They are financed by government fines against companies that fail to employ enough people with profound disabilities. These charges pay for the National Integration Service, as well as special regional programmes.

One such regional programme is a project called 'integration agreement' that shows a positive trend among car manufacturers that are proactively addressing the concerns of severely disabled persons. Whilst the workers' council associate a company's integration agreement with the hope of new appointments of employees with special needs, external experts view this rather as an attempt at safeguarding the employment of current staff (Niehaus and Bernhard 2008).

The National Integration Service is responsible for the reintegration of people with disabilities into the regular labour market. These persons can either come from employment or from sheltered workshops. Evaluations concerning people with mental disabilities exist in Germany, such as the report of the EQUAL-Entwicklungspartnerschaft (Hohn 2005, Niehaus 2008) or the process analysis by Doose (2007b). In the Doose evaluation, 67% of the 228 participants achieved placement into permanent employment contracts. Special attention is paid in the literature and the media to the 'Hamburger Arbeitsassistentz' as an integrated integration project. Particularly people with mental disabilities are given the possibility of a working life in the regular labour market. A guide ('Arbeitsassistent') – who withdraws more and more as the employee integrates with the workplace – supports the adolescent on the job and counsels the companies individually to ensure success. The development of the 'Arbeitsassistentz' was made possible by means of the European Union's Social Fund, and has been evaluated by Hinz and Boban (2001). The placement of more than 50% of the participants – first into accompanied practical training with ambulant vocational training, and then into socially-insured employment with standard wages – was achieved.

However, only a quarter of the supported employees worked full-time, while all the others worked in part-time contracts (Hinz and Boban 2001). Even though disadvantaged people who are supported by the 'Arbeitsassistenz' find their work more demanding, they are more content and learn more than the control group, according to the information provided by the participants. Furthermore, 41% of the questioned people from sheltered workshops stated that they intended to leave the workshop for the regular labour market (Hinz and Boban 2001). Despite this success, direct integration schemes still form a minority in Germany. In addition, adolescents with learning difficulties or emotional disturbances do not count as severely disabled in the sense of SGB IX (Doose 2007b), and therefore do not have a claim to individual accompaniment.

The situation in the USA is different. Due to American anti-discrimination laws, the Ministry of Education accepts the results of rehabilitation only if the disabled person is integrated into a working environment (Kregel and Dean, 2002). 200,000 people with different disabilities were thus employed in the general labour market in 2005 through 'supported employment' (Lawhead 2005). The survey by Mank, Cioffi and Yovanoff (2003) with 656 participants showed that disabled persons who were integrated in the workplace earned the same wages for the same working hours as non-disabled part-time employees. The most common areas of employment are gastronomy, maintenance work, janitorial work, and in office environments (Mank, Cioffi and Yovanoff 2003).

6. Conclusion

Occasionally, data from indirect school-based schemes are glossed over, which is problematic in research. On the one hand, validity is questionable if there are high dropout rates and these are not included in the presentation. On the other hand, whether a state-funded vocational training scheme can be referred to as a success at all should be discussed critically. If and when a step away from the state-funded supporting system succeeds cannot yet be predicted.

Although there are different developmental courses in the different federal states, a quick switch from indirect school-based measures in favour of integrated models is unlikely. The transition from apprenticeship or vocational training to the workplace is called the 'Zweite Schwelle' (second threshold) in German. In the Stuttgart transition sample, the second threshold in the transition from education to full-time occupation had not been reached even two years after leaving school. Proper assessment of the second threshold would require a longer survey, tracing development for five years after leaving school. Many adolescents started a three-year vocational training programme in a state-funded measure one year after leaving school, meaning that two years was not enough time to measure a successful transition.

Such a study was conducted in the USA. In the NLTS2 longitudinal study, the employment rate of adolescents with special educational needs was 43%. Employment rates within the different forms of disabilities were broken down as follows: adolescents with learning disabilities with 46.4%, adolescents with speech/language impairment with 57.9%, adolescents with intellectual disability with 24.8% and adolescents with emotional disturbance with 36.2% (Cameto 2005).

60% of adolescents with special educational needs lasted six months or less in their jobs after finishing school. Thus, the situation in the USA for adolescents and adults with special educational needs at the entry into working life seems to be difficult. Convincing studies for Germany concerning this issue are needed.

The financing of training schemes outside of companies is chiefly done in a selective way. After leaving school, adolescents go through a programme tailored exactly to this homogenous risk group. Gaupp and Geier (2010) state that after leaving school, students that completed pre-vocational training programme (BVJ) often went to another secondary school if they attended a Hauptschule first, but began a state-funded educational programme if they attended a special school first. All in all, few 'training programme careers' can be detected,

where students attended more than two different programmes. The first programme, however, seldom leads to a dual education (that is, an in-company training programme coupled with school attendance), but places many adolescents into a state-funded educational programme as a follow-up. The occupational outlook for placement into the regular labour market seems to be clearly limited. Pre-vocational training programmes (BVJ) in particular should be regarded critically here, as they do not fulfil the function of enabling pupils of secondary schools as well as of schools for special needs to switch into the dual system. Only a few participate in a second training programme. For example, in the DJI study in Stuttgart, only a few adolescents (N=8 of 100) were placed into a similar programme after a year of full-time schooling. As integration into the regular labour market is not successful within the scope of the BVJ, it remains questionable to what extent speaking of success in pre-vocational training with those adolescents in Germany is possible. Corresponding to this, Hiller (1994) demanded the closing of this part of pre-vocational schemes in the 1990s.

In Austria, the former dual-system was reformed in 2003 to an integrative teaching system (IBA) by adopting numerous instruments from the supported employment approach – for example, job-coaching and assistance in work and education. A preliminary evaluation suggests that the reformed system has been accepted and only 25% of the participating adolescents dropped out (Heckl, Dörflinger, Dorr and Klimmer 2008).

Another interesting system exists in Denmark and Sweden. Adolescents with special needs receive continued support by special advisors. During the career phase, these adolescents can draw on this support system. Moreover, in Norway there is an established concept to qualify people with special needs continuously, even after entry into professional life (Wetzel 2002).

The 'supported employment' approach has been represented by the European Union of Supported Employment (euse.org) umbrella organization since 1993. However, a direct comparison between countries is difficult, as there are very different entrance requirements, financing solutions and incentives in the different European countries, as well as a different

definition of concepts such as disability, placement, workplace or work sample (Doose 2007a). In summary, it can be stated that the placement rates in all countries amount to between 30% and 40% for lower qualified jobs (Spjelkavik and Evans 2007).

Austria, having a relatively similar vocational education system to Germany, succeeded in embedding the approach of supported employment into the dual system. If this re-organisation proves to be useful - as empirical evidence is starting to show - it could be a potentially path for Germany as well. Although the approach of supported employment is rather common among remedial teachers, and is, moreover, the only concept to take into account the demands of the UN Convention from 2006 Art. 27, it still suffers a marginal existence in the Federal Republic of Germany. Despite its marginal existence, the effectiveness of supported employment has been proven for Germany as well (Hinz and Boban 2001; Doose 2007b; Niehaus 2008). However, due to the current legal situation and the distribution of indirect vocational training centres, supported employment still only plays a minor role.

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