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VIENNA'S PLEDGE TO THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS  
INVOLVEMENT IN PRINCIPLE No. 04: Active support to employment

Short political message/introduction

U25 – Together for Young People in Vienna

Mid-January 2021 saw the launch of the fully operative U25 service centre in Lehrbachgasse 18 in Vienna's 12<sup>th</sup> municipal district. For the first time, decentralised operative institutions active in the fields of social affairs, social and health law as well as organisational units of AMS Vienna (Public Employment Service) co-operate under one roof to offer both financial support and labour market-related as well as social counselling for adolescents and young adults aged 15 to 24 years (one-stop shop).

It is a key objective of Vienna's labour-market and social policies to offer the best possible support and assistance to adolescents and young adults in their transition from school to work in order to enable their sustainable integration into the labour market. With U25, the City of Vienna is implementing one more strategy to fight youth unemployment so that young people are placed in a position to earn a living income independently and on a long-term basis.

The preconditions for this must already be created among adolescents and young adults, as the by far highest risk of unemployment is borne by persons who have no educational qualifications beyond compulsory schooling. In March 2022, this quota was 19.8% total, i.e. 19.3% for women and 20.2% for men.

This strategy and its underlying guiding principles reflect the core elements of the European Pillar of Social Rights, most specifically the principle of active support to employment, and constitute an important step in the fight against poverty in Vienna.

The U25 service centre fulfils a pioneering function regarding social support and labour market integration for the City of Vienna and Austria as a whole. In this context, the innovative aspect lies in a combination of federal and provincial authorities, with the socio-politically highly relevant goal of implementing a modern and effective range of services under one roof in Vienna, which is targeted at unemployed young people who receive basic benefit payments. The U25 project shows that it is possible, despite different organisational and decision-making structures (AMS Vienna and City of Vienna), to devise a joint, unified service range for this target group. The facility accommodates two regional offices of AMS Vienna and a social centre of the Municipal Department for Social Welfare, Social and Public Health Law (with an AMS staff of approx. 240 persons and a City of Vienna staff of 120 persons).

This close co-operation between AMS Vienna and the City of Vienna serves the purpose of pooling resources, improving service quality and allowing for a more efficient exchange between organisations as well as for a better co-ordination of procedures. It is a key goal to achieve faster and more sustainable integration of adolescents and young adults with regard to both education and employment.

In the "U25 Info" zone (reception area), staff members of both AMS Vienna and the Municipal Department for Social Welfare, Social and Public Health Law provide joint counselling. Another important factor lies in the introduction of case management by AMS Vienna and the possibility for case managers to directly request the services of social workers of the Municipal Department for Social Welfare, Social and Public Health Law.

Cross-organisational, multi-professional teams permit a comprehensive approach to counselling and support.

An innovative approach of U25 lies in providing not only the abovementioned services at the U25 centre, but in making the services of other institutions concerned with youth and education likewise available for young people in Vienna. For example, the Vienna debt advice service currently offers workshops for obtaining a finance driving licence at the U25 centre. Moreover, a new U25 women empowerment project for young and/or single mothers was launched in April to prepare this target group for a return to the labour market.

In addition to ensuring a higher rate of success in the fields of support and counselling, significant internal synergy effects are an outcome of the strategy as well.

The City of Vienna is convinced that the implementation of this strategy will constitute a valuable contribution towards actively combating poverty and unemployment among young people.



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