

SECTION A - DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED/MONITORED PRACTICE	
Name of the practice, original language	Flexibilitätsberatung für Betrieb
English translation of the name of the practice	Flexibility Coaching for companies
Country	Austria
Description of the practice	<p>Flexibility Coaching is a practice provided by private consultancies with financial support of the Austrian Employment Service (AMS) and the European Social Fund. The programme is free of charge for the participating companies and addresses all Austrian companies with more than 50 employees. However, in practice the majority of participating companies were SMEs (up to 250 employees). The programme offers a maximum of 15 consulting days and is organised in 3 stages.</p> <p>The main objective of Flexibility Coaching is to improve the flexibility of companies so they can better handle structural changes. The basic aim is to improve HR management practices in light of sudden changes or imminent problems, such as fluctuations in demand, upcoming or seasonal redundancies.</p> <p>The practice provides support for internal management structures to achieve a balance between flexibility and stability, matching the needs of both employees and companies.</p> <p>More specifically, the main goals of the Flexibility Coaching practice are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To effectively support the flexibility of companies with regard to their HR management structures and procedures; ▪ To establish professional flexibility management in companies; ▪ To strengthen the adaptability of companies to manage upcoming problems by themselves. <p>More information about the practice can be found at http://www.ams.at/sfu/14091_18666.html (in German; accessed December 2012) and http://www.deloitte.com/view/de_at/at/254a3b358e6e0210VgnV</p>

	CM100000ba42f00aRCRD.htm (in German; accessed December 2012)
Type/classification	<p>Targeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employers <p>Type of practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of clients' needs <p>Delivery Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face contacts <p>Contracting out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Private <p>Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private
Policy context	<p>Flexibility Coaching is a preventive employment policy instrument of the national Public Employment Service (AMS). Participation in the programme is voluntary.</p>
Labour market context	<p>Austrian companies face increasing competition, financial pressure and/or sudden fluctuations in demand. The Flexibility Coaching practice has been introduced as a measure to address these challenges. Improved forward planning of the workforce structure for the entire year and a preventive warning system for upcoming challenges are the proposed instruments of the programme.</p>
Activities	<p>The programme is structured as a 3 stage procedure and covers a maximum of 15 consulting days provided by the “flex-ability team” (external consultants contracted by AMS).</p> <p>Step I: First face-to-face meeting After a first contact between the “Company Service” (SfU) of the AMS and the respective company, an initial informative meeting is arranged (1 consulting day).</p> <p>Step II: Flex-Check The “flex-ability team” provided by the consultancy company analyses the current circumstances of the company, identify main problems and tasks, and involve relevant actors at the company level (e.g. management, board, employees). The consultants draw up a first “flexibility strategy” (up to 5 consulting days).</p> <p>Step III: Flex-Consulting If the company is further interested in the programme and is granted funding by the AMS, the actual Flexibility Coaching</p>

	<p>phase begins. The consultants develop an individual flexibility strategy corresponding to the needs of the company and offer solutions and assistance in the implementation of the first steps. This phase may span a maximum of 9 consulting days. The ninth day is reserved for gender-specific issues, affirmative action programmes for women or equal opportunity issues.</p> <p>The flex-ability team offers know-how in eight HR-related action fields: 1) diversity management; 2) productive ageing; 3) mobility; 4) working hours; 5) flexible workforce 6) further qualification and training, 7) organisation and 8) equal pay.</p> <p>New challenges and customer needs lead to a change in working time models. The practice tries to improve the management structures of the company to enable flexible, efficient and market-related action carried out by the company itself.</p>
Management and operation	The SfU of AMS informs and advises companies about using the services of the Flexibility Coaching programme (step I). ÖSB Consulting GmbH in cooperation with Deloitte Human Capital are responsible for step II and step III.
Target groups/beneficiaries (if any)	All Austrian companies with more than 50 employees are targeted, but the majority of companies making use of the practice are SMEs.
Start date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005
End date (actual or planned)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 (planned)
Gender dimension	The design of the practice includes an explicit view to improve gender equality in the labour market. The practice includes consultation with regard to new job perspectives for women as well as measures for women returning to work after maternal leave and parental part-time work regulation. Since 2012, equal pay has been introduced as an additional field of consulting.
Products involved in or resulting from the practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No
Outcomes of the practice (planned/expected and actual)	<p>The goal of the practice (to enhance the cooperation and exchange of information between AMS and companies) has been achieved as well as regional cooperation between companies.</p> <p>1,277 enterprises participated in the programme from 2005 until</p>

	<p>the end of 2010. 72% of the companies have implemented the results of the consulting service. The main HR-related action fields were: organisation (46%), working hours (31%) and further qualification and training (24%).</p> <p>Although the project was not specifically designed for SMEs, the majority of participants are companies with 50 to 250 employees. From 2005 to 2009, more than 65% of all companies consulted by the programme were SMEs.</p> <p>Almost all participating companies were satisfied with the work carried out by the consultants.</p>
Source of funding (tick all relevant sources)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National budget (tax revenue) • European Social Fund
Main responsible body, type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Employment Service at national level
Role of implementing body	<p>The Company Service (SfU) of the Employment Service Austria (AMS) is responsible for informing companies about the services of the Flexibility Coaching programme, as well as for the first, informational talk (step I).</p>
Other bodies involved in implementation of the practice as partners or contractors	<p>ÖSB Consulting GmbH in cooperation with Deloitte Human Capital provides the actual counselling.</p>

SECTION B - IDENTIFICATION OF THE EVALUATED/MONITORED PRACTICE	
Title of practice in original language	Flexibilitätsberatung für Betrieb
Title of practice, English translation	Flexibility Coaching for companies
Geographical area of implementation	National
Contact details of the main implementing body	
Name of the organisation, original language	ÖSB GmbH.
Name of the organisation, English translation	ÖSB Consulting
Web page	http://www.oesb.at
Name of contact person	KUNCIC,Susannah
Title of contact person	Mag.
Email address	susannah.kuncic@oesb.at
Telephone no.	+ 43 1 33168 3510
Link to national reports in the Eurostat's LMP database in "CIRCA"	N/a
Contact details in the Public Employment Service	
Name of the organisation, original language	AMS Österreich Bundesgeschäftsstelle
Name of the organisation, English translation	Public Employment Service Austria (AMS)
Web page	http://www.ams.at (German) http://www.ams.at/english.html (English)
Name of contact person	PROKSCH,Elisabeth
Title of contact person	Dr.

Email address	elisabeth.proksch@ams.at
Telephone no.	+43 1 33178 621
Web reference	N/A
Practice referee	
Name of referee	KLINGSEISEN,Bibiana
Title of referee	Mag.
Organisation	Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz (Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection)
Email address	Bibiana.Klingseisen@bmask.gv.at
Telephone no.	+43 171100 6428
Information about evaluation of the practice	
When was the practice evaluated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual year(s) of evaluation: 2006-2010 • Date of publication of evaluation: 2011
Type of organisation carrying out the evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research institution
Details of the organisation responsible for carrying out the evaluation	
Name of the organisation, original language	L&R Sozialforschung
Name of the organisation, English translation	L&R Social Research
Web page	http://www.lrsocialresearch.at (in German and English)
Overall evaluation methodology/methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome/effect evaluation using other methods (e.g. analysis of statistical data, surveys etc.)
Indicators in the evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other indicators, please describe: degree of implementation of the results of the consulting service
Main findings of the evaluation	The evaluation is ex-post and it is based on a multi-method approach consisting of the analysis of monitoring data, PES databases, and representative interviews with representatives of enterprises using the services, interviews with representatives of enterprises not using the service (control group), expert

	<p>interviews and a focus group. It takes into account the period 2006-2010 and considers findings of an interim evaluation which took place in 2006 (Lechner/Wetzel, 2006).</p> <p>In the period covered by the evaluation, from 2006 till 2010, 1,277 enterprises participated in the programme: 72% of the sampled companies (452) implemented the results of the consulting service, most of them in the field of organisation (46%), followed by working hours (31%) and further qualification and training (24%).</p> <p>According to a satisfaction survey carried out in the evaluation, more than 65 % of all companies reached by the programme were SMEs and nearly all companies (89%) were satisfied with the work of the consultants.</p> <p>The practice is aimed to be an instrument to support enterprises to adapt to flexibility needs to ultimately secure and increase employment, in this respect, employment relevant findings of the evaluation are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerning the maintenance of jobs the findings are mixed: a third of interviewees stated that the practice helped to maintain jobs, another third stated that it likely helped, whereas another third claimed that the practice did have no effect. - Regarding assignments of job seekers to vacancies in the participating enterprises, a positive effect, in particular for large companies, was clearly visible according to the analysis of administrative data. However, there is no positive effect for successful placements. <p>Since the practice was designed as a demand-oriented consulting service, the positive qualitative evaluation findings should be given particular importance. The bottom line for the evaluation results is, then, whether the practice helps to meet the enterprises' self-defined needs.</p>
Change in practice following evaluation	N/a
Documentation of the evaluation	
Type of documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report

<p>Reference</p>	<p>Riesenfelder, A., Schelepa, S., Wetzels, P. (2011): <i>Flexibilitätsberatung für Betriebe (FBB): Forschungsbericht</i>, Wien</p> <p>http://www.forschungsnetzwerk.at/downloadpub/EB_FBB_Bericht_ams_lr.pdf (in German, accessed October 2012)</p>
<p>Monitoring evidence</p>	<p>A monitoring database of the participants (companies) of the programme has been established. Monitoring data is collected by the consortium providing the counselling service (ÖSB Consulting & Deloitte) in cooperation with the Austrian PES. The database is updated on an on-going basis (when new companies decide to make use of the practice).</p> <p>The database contains the number of companies taking part in the practice (by size and sector of activity), the regional distribution of the companies, the number of participants (individuals), as well as the type of training offered. This database is not publicly available.</p>

SECTION C - CLASSIFICATION OF PRACTICE

C.1 Target group(s) (where relevant)

Not targeted

Jobseekers:

All unemployed

Long-term unemployed

Employed (threatened by redundancy)

Youth

Older jobseekers

Persons suffering from physical disability or illness

Disabled (physical) / Disabled (mental/psychological)

Men

Women

Other (specify)

Job changers

People seeking training

Employees

Out of work: adult

Out or work: youth

Employers

All employers

SMEs

Others, specify:

X

C.2 Type of practice

C.2.1 Practices related to management or servicing of clients	
Registration, identification of client needs and matching	
Registration of clients	
Registration of vacancies	
Identification of clients' needs	X
Matching services	
Active labour market policies and supports	
Individual counselling/guidance/mentoring/coaching	
Group counselling/guidance	
Training (classroom)	
Training (work-based, including apprenticeship)	
Work experience / work trials	
Subsidised employment	
In-work support for persons with reduced working capacity	
Vocational rehabilitation	
Provision of jobs: public works / community / voluntary sector jobs	
Support for self-employment / business start-up	
Treatment of physiological or psychological difficulties or support for such treatment	
C.2.2 Practices related to labour market information and internal procedures	
Labour market information (LMI)	
Collection of LMI (demand, supply or both)	
Analysis of LMI	
Dissemination of LMI	
Internal procedures	

Management systems	
Performance management / target setting	
Contract management	
Staff training/development	
Procedures for systematic contact to employers	
C.3 Delivery method(s)	
Delivery methods involved (where known and/or relevant)	
Surface mail	
e-Services	
Mobile e-services (apps for smartphones/tablets)	
Mass media (television/radio)	
Phone/SMS	
Face to face contacts	X
Not applicable (internal procedures)	
C.4 Contracting out	
Extent of contracting out of practice: The service is contracted out...	
In full	
Partly	X
Not at all	
Type of subcontractor(s)	
Public	
Private	X
Third sector	

C.5 Partnership	
Type of partners (if any) involved in implementation of the practice	
Public	
Private	X
Third sector	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title of the practice in the original language	Flexibilitätsberatung für Betrieb
Title of the practice, English translation	Flexibility Coaching for companies
Country	Austria
Responsible body	AMS Österreich Bundesgeschäftsstelle Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) PROKSCH, Elisabeth elisabeth.proksch@ams.at +43 1 33178 621 http://www.ams.at (German) http://www.ams.at/english.html (English)
Implementing body	ÖSB Consulting KUNCIC, Susannah susannah.kuncic@oesb.at + 43 1 33168 3510 http://www.oesb.at
Source of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National budget (tax revenue) • European Social Fund
Purpose objectives and	<p>Flexibility Coaching is a practice provided by private consultancies with financial support of the Austrian Employment Service (AMS) and the European Social Fund. The programme is free of charge for the participating companies and addresses all Austrian companies with more than 50 employees. However, in practice the majority of participating companies were SMEs (up to 250 employees). The programme offers a maximum of 15 consulting days and is organised in 3 stages.</p> <p>The main objective of Flexibility Coaching is to improve the flexibility of companies so they can better handle structural changes. The basic aim is to improve HR management practices in light of sudden changes or imminent problems, such as fluctuations in demand, upcoming or seasonal redundancies.</p> <p>The practice provides support for internal management structures to achieve a balance between flexibility and stability, matching the needs of both employees and companies.</p> <p>More specifically, the main goals of the Flexibility Coaching practice are:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To effectively support the flexibility of companies with regard to their HR management structures and procedures; ▪ To establish professional flexibility management in companies; ▪ To strengthen the adaptability of companies to manage upcoming problems by themselves. <p>More information about the practice can be found at: http://www.ams.at/sfu/14091_18666.html (in German; accessed December 2012) and http://www.deloitte.com/view/de_at/at/254a3b358e6e0210VgnVCM100000ba42f00aRCRD.htm (in German; accessed December 2012)</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<p>The programme is structured as a 3 stage procedure and covers a maximum of 15 consulting days provided by the “flex-ability team” (external consultants contracted by AMS).</p> <p>Step I: First face-to-face meeting After a first contact between the “Company Service” (SfU) of the AMS and the respective company, an initial informative meeting is arranged (1 consulting day).</p> <p>Step II: Flex-Check The “flex-ability team” provided by the consultancy company analyses the current circumstances of the company, identify main problems and tasks, and involve relevant actors at the company level (e.g. management, board, employees). The consultants draw up a first “flexibility strategy” (up to 5 consulting days).</p> <p>Step III: Flex-Consulting If the company is further interested in the programme and is granted funding by the AMS, the actual Flexibility Coaching phase begins. The consultants develop an individual flexibility strategy corresponding to the needs of the company and offer solutions and assistance in the implementation of the first steps. This phase may span a maximum of 9 consulting days. The ninth day is reserved for gender-specific issues, affirmative action programmes for women or equal opportunity issues.</p> <p>The flex-ability team offers know-how in eight HR-related action fields: 1) diversity management; 2) productive ageing; 3) mobility; 4) working hours; 5) flexible workforce 6) further qualification and training, 7) organisation and 8) equal pay.</p> <p>In regard to working hours, new challenges and customer needs lead to a change in working time models. The practice tries to improve the management structures of the company to enable flexible, efficient and</p>

	<p>market-related action carried out by the company itself. The consultants support companies to successfully handle their flexible workforce by integrating temporary workers without neglecting social standards.</p> <p>The SfU of AMS informs and advises companies about using the services of the Flexibility Coaching programme (step I). ÖSB Consulting GmbH in cooperation with Deloitte Human Capital are responsible for step II and step III.</p>
Target groups/beneficiaries, if any	All Austrian companies with more than 50 employees are targeted, but the majority of companies making use of the practice are SMEs.
Period of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start: 2005 • Finish: 2013 (planned)
Gender perspective and other equality issues	The design of the practice includes an explicit view to improve gender equality in the labour market. The practice includes consultation with regard to new job perspectives for women as well as measures for women returning to work after maternal leave and parental part-time work regulation. Since 2012, equal pay has been introduced as an additional field of consulting
Products, if any	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No
Outcomes	<p>The goal of the practice (to enhance the cooperation and exchange of information between AMS and companies) has been achieved as well as regional cooperation between companies.</p> <p>1,277 enterprises participated in the programme from 2005 until the end of 2010. 72% of the companies have implemented the results of the consulting service. The main HR-related action fields were: organisation (46%), working hours (31%) and further qualification and training (24%).</p> <p>Although the project was not specifically designed for SMEs, the majority of participants are companies with 50 to 250 employees. From 2005 to 2009, more than 65% of all companies consulted by the programme were SMEs.</p> <p>Almost all participating companies were satisfied with the work carried out by the consultants.</p>
Evaluation	<p><u>The evaluation methods used</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome/effect evaluation using other methods (e.g. analysis of statistical data, surveys etc.) <p><u>Indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other indicators, please describe: degree of implementation of the results of the consulting service

	<p><u>Evaluation results</u></p> <p>The evaluation is ex-post and it is based on a multi-method approach consisting of the analysis of monitoring data, PES databases, and representative interviews with representatives of enterprises using the services, interviews with representatives of enterprises not using the service (control group), expert interviews and a focus group. It takes into account the period 2006-2010 and considers findings of an interim evaluation which took place in 2006 (Lechner/Wetzel, 2006).</p> <p>In the period covered by the evaluation, from 2006 till 2010, 1,277 enterprises participated in the programme: 72% of the sampled companies (452) implemented the results of the consulting service, most of them in the field of organisation (46%), followed by working hours (31%) and further qualification and training (24%).</p> <p>According to a satisfaction survey carried out in the evaluation, more than 65 % of all companies reached by the programme were SMEs and nearly all companies (89%) were satisfied with the work of the consultants.</p> <p>The practice is aimed to be an instrument to support enterprises to adapt to flexibility needs to ultimately secure and increase employment, in this respect, employment relevant findings of the evaluation are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerning the maintenance of jobs the findings are mixed: a third of interviewees stated that the practice helped to maintain jobs, another third stated that it likely helped, whereas another third claimed that the practice did have no effect. - Regarding assignments of job seekers to vacancies in the participating enterprises, a positive effect, in particular for large companies, was clearly visible according to the analysis of administrative data. However, there is no positive effect for successful placements. <p>Since the practice was designed as a demand-oriented consulting service, the positive qualitative evaluation findings should be given particular importance. The bottom line for the evaluation results is, then, whether the practice helps to meet the enterprises' self-defined needs.</p> <p><u>Reference</u></p> <p>Riesenfelder, A., Schelepa, S., Wetzel, P. (2011): Flexibilitätsberatung für Betriebe (FBB): Forschungsbericht, Wien http://www.forschungsnetzwerk.at/downloadpub/EB_FBB_Bericht_ams_lr.pdf (in German; accessed October 2012)</p>
Monitoring	A monitoring database of the participants (companies) of the programme has

	<p>been established. Monitoring data is collected by the consortium providing the counselling service (ÖSB Consulting & Deloitte) in cooperation with the Austrian PES. The database is updated on an on-going basis (when new companies decide to make use of the practice).</p>
--	---

The database contains the number of companies taking part in the practice (by size and sector of activity), the regional distribution of the companies, the number of participants (individuals), as well as the type of training offered. This database is not publicly available.