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FEDERAL MINISTRY OF  
LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND  
CONSUMER PROTECTION



**European Year for combating poverty  
and social exclusion (2010)**

**Austrian programme**

**May 2009**

# 1. NATIONAL CONTEXT: THE CHALLENGES TO BE MET

## 1.1 The challenges and the national strategy against poverty <sup>1</sup>

The current financial and economic crisis has far-reaching social consequences for people at risk of poverty in Austria. Based on currently available data from the national monitoring programme on the social impact of the financial and economic crisis, the national context may be described as follows:

**Employment and unemployment.** The bad economic situation has already had significant effects on the situation in the labour market which is expected to worsen during the next months. At the end of April 2009 Austria counted a total of 3,354,500 people employed, i.e. 38,300 or 1.2% less than the previous year. The export-oriented branches of goods production and temporary work are affected most severely. The number of unemployed registered at the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS) amounted to 258,240 at the end of April and exceeded by 53,200 people or 25.9% the previous year's total. The increase was especially significant among men (+37.3%), young people (+34.2%) and persons not holding an Austrian citizenship (+31.6%).

**Risk of poverty.** Based on the data of SILC 2007, the at-risk-of-poverty rate is about 12% (at-risk-of-poverty threshold 10,945€ annually or 912€ monthly for one-person households). During the last ten years, the at-risk-of-poverty rate remained relatively constant and the poverty gap narrowed. Increasing income inequality has had a negative impact on the poverty rate, while the higher labour force participation of women and generally higher level of education and training of the population have shown positive effects.

Among the groups affected most severely by poverty due to low incomes are households of long-term unemployed persons (at-risk-of-poverty rate: 41%), lone parents (32%), households with persons not holding an Austrian citizenship (non-EU/non-EFTA Member States) (26%), female pensioners living alone (27%), households with three and more children (19%) as well as households with people with disabilities (18%). A group not included in the EU-SILC data but facing extreme poverty are homeless people.

15% of all children and young people aged below 27 years dependent on their parents are at risk of poverty. Women's labour force participation is a decisive tool to provide families with incomes above the at-risk-of-poverty threshold. In multiple-person households with one child in which the woman is economically active the poverty risk is 5%, while it climbs to 19% in cases in which the woman is not working. To increase women's labour force participation, adequate and high-quality childcare facilities are required. Hence, measures to improve the supply with childcare facilities contribute significantly to reducing the poverty risks of families.

About 5% of the population (398,000 persons) are manifestly poor, i.e. they do not only earn low incomes but also face restriction in daily life (financial deprivation). To combat poverty comprehensively, it is not only necessary to secure incomes but also

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<sup>1</sup> *The main priorities in combating poverty and social exclusion were described in the Austrian Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008/2010.*

to invest in social infrastructure. This basic situation has been decisive for defining the priorities described in para. 2.1.

## **1.2 The administrative structure in place**

The Austrian social protection system is characterised by a mix of centralised and decentralised elements; the services/benefits (under social insurance law and those of a universal nature) falling within the purview of the Federal Republic are, however, prevailing. Parts of the health system, the housing system, a major part of the social services, childcare facilities as well as social assistance fall within regional competence (Länder, cities and municipalities). Regional and local players are of crucial importance in the context of combating poverty.

The Austrian social protection system is based on a wide social consensus and supported by an active and well working social partnership. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play a major role in providing social services.

The Department of EU Policy and Coordination of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection is in charge of implementing the European Year and acts as the **National Implementing Body (NIB)**. This Department was not only responsible for the overall coordination of the Austrian Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion but also managed the Ministry's activities during the Austrian Council Presidency. The experience gained in managing EU programmes (e.g. ESF, PROGRESS) will also be an asset in carrying out its mandate during the European Year.

## **2. THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME AND THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

### **2.1 Activities of the 2010 European Year**

In accordance with the objectives of the 2010 European Year (recognition of rights, shared responsibility and participation, cohesion, commitment and concrete action), networking of the relevant stakeholders will be crucial in implementing the activities. A joint coordinated approach at different levels, mutual learning and concrete initiatives will support the objective of combating existing stereotypes about people in situations of poverty and social exclusion and of developing concrete implementation strategies in the combat against poverty. Strong emphasis is also placed on the sustainability of measures and activities beyond the European Year.

The key measure envisaged for the 2010 European Year is the concrete implementation of a means-tested guaranteed minimum income. Furthermore, Austria has also signed up for participation in the EU Programme “Food Distribution to the Most Deprived Persons“ with the European Commission and will implement the programme for the first time during the European Year 2010.

In accordance with the analysis made and the priorities defined in the Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008-2010, the focus in implementing the activities of the 2010 European Year will be on the issues below. These activities are to be realised at federal level on the one hand and other stakeholders in Austria on the other hand. In this context, planning activities in the Länder and the initiatives of the social partners and NGOs are of vital importance. To promote networking and exchanges, meetings of the relevant stakeholders are to be organised for developing and preparing regional and local action plans on social inclusion. In this way the sustainability of the activities of the European Year is to be enhanced.

Besides the activities and measures described above, there are a number of “good practice” examples, which are to be published on the national website ([www.2010gegenarmut.at](http://www.2010gegenarmut.at)) so as to make them available to a wide public and to promote mutual learning.

#### **a.) Promoting integrative labour markets and integrated approaches to active social inclusion**

These activities comprise above all initiatives promoting the integration of the groups furthest away from the labour market and of the population groups hit most severely by the economic and financial crisis as well as initiatives for groups with a higher poverty risk (young people, women with care-giving obligations, people with disabilities, older workers, long-term unemployed persons, people with a migration background). Labour market policy is a key element in eradicating poverty and social exclusion.

The Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice/AMS) plans in particular the following priorities (for a detailed description see Annex 3):

- Preventing long-term unemployment by taking measures for jobless persons at an early stage of unemployment (counselling, training, placement services and

many others) and by employing long-term unemployed persons (e.g. employment subsidies)

- Supporting women with care-giving obligations seeking (re-)integration into the labour market
- Measures to combat youth unemployment by guaranteeing basic vocational training in the framework of the “Training Guarantee for Young People“
- Preventing unemployment of older people or preventing unemployment of older people from becoming a permanent situation (“active/productive ageing“, measures promoting employment)
- Reducing the duration of unemployment by integration into the employment system for people with disabilities

Within the sphere of responsibility of the Federal Social Welfare Agencies and under the Territorial Employment Pacts, the following measures will be taken:

- Targeted campaigns under the TEPs (= Territorial Employment Pacts) promoting the active inclusion of persons outside the labour market in the individual Länder
- Measures promoting labour market integration of people with disabilities by the Service for Enterprises (Federal Social Welfare Agencies)
- Widening the range of measures for young people with disabilities in the framework of the Employment Campaign of the Federal Social Welfare Agencies (support and qualification measures, Clearing Programme, integrative vocational training, vocational training assistance for young people)

The activities planned include for example:

- Annual meeting of the ESF 2010, with the combat against poverty as a key item on the agenda
- Expert meeting of the Vienna Chamber of Labour on “Poverty and Gainful Employment” in the first quarter 2010
- Increasing the number of “social markets” (SOMA) in some Länder to support the supply of people at risk of poverty with goods for their daily needs
- International rehabilitation congress of the Vocational Training and Rehabilitation Centre (Berufliches Bildungs- und Rehabilitationszentrum/BBRZ) in Linz in the context of the European Year

- Projects for the integration of people with a migration background, such as the following:
  - continuing the pilot project “Mentors for Migrants“ of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, the Public Employment Service (AMS) and the Austrian Integration Fund (realisation of this project at Austria-wide level is being discussed)
  - organising an event on “migration“ by the Federation of Austrian Industrialists
  - “Study about Migration and Integration“ by the Austrian Advisory Board on Economic and Social Issues of the social partners
- Model of certification for companies fit for ageing / older age by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMAK)
- Project “Success based on fair responsibility“, online platform for “social responsibility“ of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber
- TRIGOS award 2010 for enterprises taking on responsibility in the combat against poverty

## **b.) Participation in social life**

An important priority policy area of the European Year is to promote the participation of socially disadvantaged persons in social life and to facilitate access to culture and leisure opportunities (e.g. facilitated access to museums and exhibitions as well as sports opportunities). Moreover, targeted measures to prevent indebtedness are to be taken.

By supporting exchanges between the national, regional and local level (e.g. through concrete networking initiatives), the development of measures promoting participation in social life will be promoted.

To intensify implementation measures regarding the priority policy area “participation in social life“, a call for proposals of relevant projects will be published in summer 2009.

The activities planned include for example:

- Targeted projects promoting the participation of socially disadvantaged young people in sports activities (e.g. sports equipment for rent and financial support for the provision of helmets to pupils)
- Further development of art and culture projects of and for socially disadvantaged groups (e.g. the association “Hunger auf Kunst und Kultur“ [Hungry for Art and Culture] or “InterACT – Workshop for Theatre and Socio-Cultural Projects“)
- Realising the project “Financial coaching for counsellors of the women’s and girls’ counselling centres“: counsellors trained by the Counselling Centres for Debtors (Schuldnerberatungen) are to provide targeted

counselling services to women and girls seeking advice in financial matters.

- Continuing to promote and to improve the supply with counselling centres for women and girls to combat poverty and social exclusion of women and girls in previously inadequately covered regions
- Wilhelminenberg Talks 2010 (Wilhelminenberggespräche 2010) – provisional title: “Consumer policy challenges arising from the financial crisis.” One subject to be addressed could be new developments regarding the voluntary provision of credit accounts to social assistance recipients by individual banks.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Austrian Poverty Conference from 22 to 24 February 2010 in the framework of the European Anti-Poverty Network Focus Week for Austria, during which “good practices”, concrete activities, etc. will be presented across Europe.
- Holding an expert discussion on “Social cohesion in times of crisis“ in the framework of the series of events “Discussion Forum on European Integration“ of the Federal Chancellery in the framework of the European Weeks based on a relevant study (May or October 2010)
- International expert conference at the University of Linz with the EU PROGRESS project “Aurora plus - exits from poverty“ (Volkshilfe Österreich, SRZ Urban and Regional Research, Federal Working Community for Assistance to Homeless People, Institute of Societal and Social Policy of Johannes Kepler University Linz) on 15 April 2010
- Event marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2010 to present examples of every-day lives of and with people with disabilities as well as to raise awareness in dealing with people with disabilities
- European Caritas campaign: Running Miracle 2010 – charity event organised by youngCaritas.at; church services of solidarity; “One-million-stars action“: light a candle against poverty in the Christmas period 2010; presentation of the “YoungCaritas Award“
- Model project “GEMA (Gemeinsam aktiv) – Jointly Active“ in cooperation with the Social Department of the Land of Upper Austria – volunteer projects for socially disadvantaged young people and social assistance recipients as well as follow-up counselling services of the Debtors’ Counselling Service to strengthen social cohesion and gender equality

### **c.) Safeguarding access to adequate resources and services**

In this context, measures to combat child poverty, measures securing incomes and the combat against the phenomenon of the “working poor“ are key issues.

In tackling the social impact of the economic and financial crisis, a number of vital measures is taken which are to benefit socially disadvantaged groups. The following measures are of special relevance:

- Tax relief packages in the context of the tax reform as well specific measures for families
- Harmonising and increasing the reference rates for social assistance to secure the subsistence of socially disadvantaged people in the framework of introducing means-tested guaranteed minimum incomes (to strengthen the purchasing power of financially disadvantaged groups of the population)
- Measures in the framework of implementing the means-tested guaranteed minimum income: inclusion of social assistance recipients not covered by health insurance into the system of statutory health insurance to guarantee unlimited access to medical services
- Strengthening those elements in the unemployment insurance law that guarantee a minimum income in accordance with the government programme (especially net replacement rate, family supplements, amending rules concerning the criteria for taking into account the income of partners, online applications)
- Financial improvements for lone parents based on the means-tested guaranteed minimum income model
- The combat against child poverty as well as the reduction of poverty among children and young people by one third within the next 10 years are important Austrian and European concerns. Tax relief packages for families in the framework of the tax reform have been planned for the next months. This approach also covers improvements concerning childcare (e.g. introduction of the compulsory and free-of-charge nursery year), the further development of the childcare allowance and speeding up procedures regarding advances on alimony payments. In addition, it is possible that the increment for children granted to the recipients of equalisation benefits in the pension insurance will be increased as a measure supporting the implementation of the means-tested guaranteed minimum income.

It is of paramount importance to tackle the gender- and age-specific dimensions of poverty as lone parents and single pensioners are among the population groups facing the most severe poverty risks in Austria. Women’s social security will be strengthened by taking the measures enshrined in the government programme.

Through accompanying communication strategies, the European Year will raise public awareness of the situation of people affected by poverty, in particular groups or persons in precarious situations. This will help to ensure that these people will



continue to have access to adequate resources and quality services. Furthermore, the European Year makes a contribution to combating stereotypes and stigmatisation.

The activities planned include for example:

- Event addressing poverty and social exclusion of older women organised by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK) jointly with the Austrian Council for Senior Citizens (“Österreichischer Seniorenrat”, the Federation of Austrian Senior Citizens’ Organisations) on 1 October 2010
- In the framework of the open method of coordination, target-group-specific measures for households affected most severely by poverty are an important priority. Families with children, and in particular lone-parent households, are a key target group. A study “Lone Parents“ is to explore the causes and possible approaches to solutions in Austria against the background of best-practice examples of other EU Member States. The findings of the study are to be presented at events staged in the context of the European Year for combating poverty.
- Events organised by Caritas to address child poverty, including a quiz on poverty and wealth
- Event on “Women and Poverty Risks“ of the Federation of Austrian Industrialists

#### **d.) Promoting social inclusion through education and training**

Education is an important instrument for establishing equal opportunities in society and is of especially great importance in the context of social inclusion of migrants. Reform projects in the sphere of education focus on boosting quality at schools and equity to provide all young people with an opportunity for social advancement – regardless of the social and cultural background of their parents. Strong emphasis is also placed on teaching key skills, reducing the rate of school drop-outs as well as promoting participation in pre-school education. In addition, the spotlight is also turned on quality assurance and on strengthening positive approaches of educational facilities to linguistic and cultural diversity. Far-reaching measures to promote the linguistic development of children and young people (with a migration background) are being planned.

In connection with the activities mentioned in para. a) regarding the combat of youth unemployment, measures concerning education and advanced qualifications of young people are intensified. Under the labour market policy programme for women, women are to be encouraged and to receive active support in embarking on vocational training programmes for qualified jobs with good prospects and earnings opportunities.

Moreover, targeted initiatives are to be launched in the field of adult training at the level of the Länder and the Federal Republic to promote further training and

qualification measures (e.g. educational leave, vouchers for educational programmes,...). Other measures are taken in the field of literacy training, activities to encourage persons with backgrounds not oriented towards education and educationally disadvantaged persons to participate in lifelong learning and with regard to continuing innovative projects.

The activities planned include for example:

- Days of Action of Citizenship 2010 (23 April to 9 May 2010)
- Staging the Global Educational Weeks 2010 in November 2010, with poverty and social exclusion as a key topic
- Long Night of Languages focusing on language skills as an added value for mobility, employability and social integration on the European Day of Languages on 26 September 2010
- information processed for “easy access” (e.g. DVDs) about the Austrian educational system to involve parents with a migration background proactively
- Workshop of the Democracy Workshop in Parliament to sensitise children and young people aged 8 to 14 years to the key topic “poverty and social exclusion”
- The Austrian National Agency for the EU programme “Youth in Action“ will set the following priorities during the European Year:
  - well-aimed promotion of projects addressing child and youth poverty as well as social exclusion;
  - further development of the “Inclusion Strategy“ to involve (socially) disadvantaged young people in the programme activities as well as the organisation of the “Inclusion Day” to mark the European Year;
  - staging the European Youth Week in spring 2010 focusing on “poverty and social exclusion” (e.g. with a joint youth platform and an exhibition).

## **2.2 The communication strategy, including the opening event, website and national campaign**

The aim of the European Year is to raise public awareness of the situation of people affected by poverty, in particular groups or persons in precarious situations, by taking accompanying communication measures. In this way, a positive contribution is to be made to combating stereotypes and stigmatisation.

A clear and uniform communication strategy for initiatives reaching larger audiences will have the aim of correcting existing stereotype views of people affected by poverty and social exclusion. Great importance is attached to the direct involvement of people having experienced poverty in the respective projects.

The use of a single EU logo for all projects will ensure that the great number of projects initiated at the different levels is perceived as comprehensive efforts of Austria within the EU to achieve the goal of combating poverty and social exclusion in an optimal way.

Targeted activities with national, regional and local media are planned, using above all “easy-access” means of communication. Training workshops and seminars as well as focussed background talks with reporters will help to raise awareness among media experts. Academic publications will also look into the issue of combating poverty and social exclusion (e.g. special issue of the magazine “Kurswechsel“). Measures are being developed to ensure that the themes of the European Year will be addressed at various cultural events and festivals.

The aim is to establish an exchange of information through active networking, which will support the development and realisation of concrete measures and strategies:

- The three **EU-wide anti-poverty weeks** in February, May and October 2010 will be instrumental in implementing the communication strategy.
- An **opening event** (on 22 February 2010 in Salzburg, the day before the Poverty Conference will take place) **and closing event** (in Vienna in November or December) as well as **regional events** (networking meetings, exchanges, etc.) will be held. A key activity will take place on **17 October 2010, the Day of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion**. A prize for combating poverty and social exclusion could be awarded in the framework of these events. Another event or session could be staged in the Austrian Parliament.
- Creating and maintaining a special **national website** for the European Year ([www.2010gegenarmut.at](http://www.2010gegenarmut.at)).
- **Workshops** with media representatives and people experiencing poverty (already in late 2009/early 2010).
- Continuing the **project “Radio dialogues – voices of diversity“** to improve the participation of people with a migration background in society and the media, which is realised in cooperation with independent radios on the issue poverty and social exclusion
- The **ambassadors for the European Year against poverty and social exclusion** are to be persons with a strong public presence on the one hand; on the other hand, they should be familiar with the challenges of poverty and exclusion of the persons affected based on their own experience or they should have shown their personal commitment to the objective of eradicating poverty – and consequentially to the objectives of the European Year – in the past. Their popularity is to help sensitise the public to the subject and to convey the messages of the European Year in an optimal way. In addition, the ambassadors are to draw attention to the European Year and its objectives in the context of their respective activities. Moreover, people affected by poverty, so-called **“people’s ambassadors“** are to represent and lend a voice to the target groups of the anti-poverty year. The ambassadors will participate in numerous events, including the opening and closing events, of the European Year.

### **2.3 Gender mainstreaming: how it is being treated in each chapter and activity**

In the implementation of the European Year, gender mainstreaming will be taken into account as there are significant differences in the dimension and the risks of poverty and social exclusion experienced by women and men. Since single mothers or women receiving equalisation benefits face particularly high risks of poverty, the spotlight is also turned on the subject “poverty and women”.

It is of great importance that women and men are represented equally in all entities involved in the European Year as well as in the National Implementing Body. In awarding contracts and selecting measures the principle of gender mainstreaming will be taken into account. Gender balance will also be aimed at in selecting the ambassadors.

### **2.4 Accessibility of activities**

Barrier-free and easy access to all activities during the European Year must be ensured for all population groups, in particular people with disabilities. In organising the individual events, easy accessibility will be taken into account to enable the persons and target groups affected to participate. The national website for the European Year will also have a barrier-free design.

Furthermore, importance will be attached to using target-group-specific media (e.g. street newspapers,...) in all communication measures and public relations work.

## **3 CONSULTATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND STAKEHOLDERS**

### **3.1 Stakeholders consulted**

The Federal Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection<sup>2</sup> had invited all relevant Austrian stakeholders to an information event on the European Year already on 24 November 2008. On this occasion, the stakeholders were requested to present the members to be delegated to the **National Steering Committee (NSC), whose opening meeting was held on 31 March 2009**, as well to propose issues and activities for the national programme. At the second meeting of the NSC on 30 April 2009, another discussion based on a revised national programme took place.

As the responsibilities for combating poverty and social exclusion are divided between the Federal Republic and the Länder, Federal Minister Rudolf Hundstorfer informed the representatives of the Länder at the meetings of the Conference of Social Affairs Officers of the Länder in February and March on the preparations for the European Year 2010 and asked them to participate in the National Steering Committee.

It is the task of the National Steering Committee to involve all relevant stakeholders in preparing and implementing the European Year in Austria. The Committee supports and advises the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection in the context of designing and realising the activities in the framework of the European Year. For 2009 three meetings have been scheduled; in 2010 the National Steering Committee will meet three to four times.

The participants in the National Steering Committee encompass all the groups that were involved in drawing up the Austrian Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008-2010. The members of the National Steering Committee are representatives of the ministries, the individual Länder, municipalities and cities, Parliament, the social partners, the federations of non-governmental organisations active in this field as well as umbrella organisations of associations of people affected by poverty (see Annex 2). Thanks to this approach, the interest of those affected is taken into account in a comprehensive way.

In parallel, all activities for the European year are monitored by an internal steering group of the Ministry.

### **3.2 The consultation process, its outcome and follow-up**

It is a major concern of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection to achieve maximum involvement from all relevant stakeholders in accordance with the political slogan “good governance“; this principle is to be applied in particular in preparing and implementing the European Year.

As mentioned above, the Federal Ministry invited to a first information event on the 2010 European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion already in

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<sup>2</sup> In accordance with the amended Federal Ministries Act, it was renamed Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMA SK).

November 2008. At this event it also requested that each participating entity should appoint one member to the National Steering Committee (NSC), submit contributions regarding priority policy areas and provide information on the activities planned for the European Year. On 31 March 2009, the opening meeting of the NSC was held, where the first draft of the national programme was discussed. The comments and written contributions were incorporated and the revised draft of the national programme was sent out to prepare the discussion at the 2<sup>nd</sup> NSC meeting on 30 April 2009. The final version of the national programme will be presented to the stakeholders and, with a view to ensuring optimal transparency, it will be published on the website of the Federal Ministry ([www.2010gegenarmut.at](http://www.2010gegenarmut.at)). All comments received by the stakeholders since the beginning of the consultation process will also be published on this website.

Great importance is attached to the drawing up of regional and local development plans with a view to ensuring sustainable effects of the European Year. At present other follow-up measures cannot be specified but prominence will be given to sustainable measures in the evaluation report.

## 4., 5., 6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION, INDICATIVE BUDGET, EVALUATION MECHANISMS

A tender procedure conforming to the European and national law on contract awarding will be held with regard to the organisation of the opening and closing events and of the regional networking meetings, the design and maintenance of the national website and the general communication concept. Cooperation with the relevant stakeholders, in particular the organisations of the civil society, is ensured in all events and initiatives under the aegis of the National Steering Committee.

Including the EU's co-funding amount earmarked for Austria of probably 248,000€, a **total budget of about 500,000€** will be available for activities during the European Year.

In July 2009 the National Implementing Body will launch a call for proposals for projects to be funded. Depending on the final national budget, the budget for funding concrete projects is expected to amount between 100,000 and 200,000€.

In the context of organising different activities (opening and closing events, regional workshops, networking meetings, etc.) as well as maintaining the national website for the European Year, the National Implementing Body will cooperate with an external agency/institution. The respective tender procedure will take place also in summer 2009.

### Preliminary budget plan:

Activity	Total budget	EU funds (indicative)
Opening and closing events, regional events, workshop for reporters, monitoring project for regional strategy plans	200,000	100,000
Competitions, media partnerships, production of various articles with EY 2010 logo	80,000	30,000
Call for projects of social partners, NGOs,....NOTE: amount not yet fixed!	180,000	100,000
Creating and maintaining the national EY 2010 website (expenses for the total period)	40,000	20,000
Total	500,000	250,000

Strong emphasis will be placed on ongoing **documentation and monitoring**. All activities and events are to be recorded based on several criteria (budget, number of participants, etc.) for the final report on the European Year.

## **Annex 1 – Preliminary schedule**

### **Preliminary schedule for the implementation of the national programme**

#### **Activities in 2009**

##### *May*

- Submission of the national programme to the European Commission (15 May 2009)

##### *July*

- Tender procedure for contract awarding
- Call for project proposals
- Contacting possible ambassadors of the European Year

##### *September/October*

- Selection of projects for the European Year and preparation of an EU co-financing proposal
- 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the National Steering Committee likely to take place on 29 September 2009
- Participation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Consultative Committee for the European Year 2010 in Brussels on 8 October 2009

##### *November/December*

- Release of website on EU Year

##### *Late 2009/early 2010*

- Workshops with media representatives

#### **Activities in 2010**

##### *January*

- Participation in the opening event of the EU in Madrid on 21 January 2009
- Probably 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Steering Committee

##### *February*

- National opening event in Salzburg on 22 February 2010
- Focus Week of 8<sup>th</sup> Poverty Conference in Salzburg from 23 to 24 February 2010
- EU-wide anti-poverty week – 1<sup>st</sup> Austrian focus week from 22 to 28 February 2010.

##### *March*

- Perhaps regional event



#### *March/April*

- Conference at expert level on the AURORA plus project at the University of Linz on 15 April 2010
- Participation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Consultative Committee for the European Year 2010 in Brussels

#### *April/May*

- Perhaps session/event in the Austrian Parliament
- Action Day on Political Education 2010 addressing the key subject "Education for sustainable development: new approaches to eradicate poverty and social exclusion" from 23 April to 9 May 2010
- Probably 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Steering Committee
- Probably Wilhelminenberg Talks
- EU-wide anti-poverty week – 2<sup>nd</sup> Austrian focus week

#### *June/July/August*

- Presumably regional events

#### *September*

- Rehabilitation Congress of the Vocational Training and Rehabilitation Centre (Berufliches Bildungs- und Rehabilitationszentrum/BBRZ) in Linz
- Probably 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Steering Committee
- Long Night of Languages focusing on language skills as an added value for mobility, employability and social integration on the European Day of Languages on 26 September 2010

#### *October*

- Joint event of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection and the Austrian Council of Senior Citizens on poverty and social exclusion of older women on 1 October 2010
- Priority activities to mark the International Day for Combating Poverty on 17 October 2010
- EU-wide anti-poverty week – 3<sup>rd</sup> Austrian focus week

#### *November*

- Closing event of the project AURORA plus in Vienna
- Staging the Global Educational Weeks 2010 in November 2010, with the combat against poverty and social exclusion as a key issue

#### *November/December*

- Closing event of the European Year 2010 in Austria
- Participation in the closing conference of the EU in Brussels
- Participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Consultative Committee for the European Year 2010 in Brussels
- Presumably 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Steering Committee

#### *December*

- Event on the International Day of People with Disabilities to present examples of every-day lives and build awareness on 3 December 2010

## **Activities in 2011**

### *February/March*

- Preparation of the final report and discussion at the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Steering Committee

## **Annex 2 – Composition of the National Steering Committee**

- Armutskonferenz (member of EAPN)
- Augustin (street newspaper)
- Austrian Association of Cities and Towns
- Austrian Association of Municipalities
- Austrian Chamber of Agriculture
- Austrian Committee for Social Work
- Austrian Council of Senior Citizens
- Austrian Federal Economic Chambers
- Austrian Federal Youth Representative
- Austrian Federation of Trade Unions
- Austrian Integration Fund
- Austrian Public Employment Service
- Austrian Statistical Office (Statistik Austria)
- Austrian Working Community for Rehabilitation
- Caritas
- Chamber of Labour
- Counselling Centre for Migrants
- European Commission, Representation in Austria
- Federal Chancellery
- Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
- Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport
- Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth
- Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture
- Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs
- Federal Ministry of Finance
- Federal Ministry of Health
- Federal Ministry of Justice
- Federal Ministry of Science and Research
- Federal Ministry of the Interior
- Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology
- Federation of Austrian Industrialists
- Federation of Austrian Social Insurance Institutions
- Lebenshilfe Österreich (interest group for people with severe and multiple disabilities)
- Liaison unit of the Länder within the Office of the provincial government of Lower Austria
- Municipal Department 24, Vienna
- Office of the Austrian President
- Office of the provincial government of Burgenland
- Office of the provincial government of Carinthia
- Office of the provincial government of Lower Austria
- Office of the provincial government of Salzburg
- Office of the provincial government of Styria
- Office of the provincial government of Tyrol
- Office of the provincial government of Upper Austria
- Office of the provincial government of Vorarlberg
- Parliament – Office of the Speaker of the National Council
- SRZ Urban + Regional Research
- Verein AHA – Arbeitslose helfen Arbeitslosen (Association AHA – Unemployed People Helping Unemployed People)
- Volkshilfe Österreich (NGO for social services and human rights)

## Annex 3 – Contribution of the Austrian Public Employment Service (dated 22 April 2009)

### Beitrag des Arbeitsmarktservice(AMS) zur Hintergrundinformation für das „Europäische Jahr zur Bekämpfung der Armut und Sozialen Ausgrenzung 2010“

Die aktive wie passive Arbeitsmarktpolitik ist ein zentrales Instrument zur Verhinderung von Armut und sozialer Ausgrenzung. Dabei spielen sowohl die materielle Existenzsicherung durch die Arbeitslosenversicherung als auch die aktive Arbeitsmarktpolitik eine ganz wichtige Rolle bei der Herstellung von Teilhabechancen am Berufsleben und bei der gesellschaftlichen Integration.

#### 1. Die Existenzsicherung durch die Arbeitslosenversicherung

##### A) Aktuelle Ausgangssituation

Mehr als jede 6. Person des Arbeitskräfteangebots in Österreich hat 2008 einmal Leistungen aus der Arbeitslosenversicherung bezogen. Die LeistungsbezieherInnenquote der vorgemerkten Arbeitslosen lag bei rd. 92%, dh. es gibt einen hohen Grad der Existenzsicherung Arbeitsloser durch die Arbeitslosenversicherung. Gleichzeitig hat Österreich im europäischen Vergleich keine hohe Nettoersatzrate in der Arbeitslosenversicherung, sodass das Niveau der Existenzsicherung Arbeitsloser ein relativ niedriges ist.

##### Daten zur Arbeitslosenversicherung:

Jahresdurchschnittliche LeistungsbezieherInnen:

	2008			2007		
	Gesamt	Frauen	Männer	Gesamt	Frauen	Männer
Arbeitslosengeld	113.470	48.903	64.567	114.468	48.863	65.605
Notstandshilfe	78.431	32.038	46.393	85.181	35.045	50.136
§ 34 Pensionsversicherungs-gesetz	2.383	2.139	244	2.591	2.344	247
Übergangsgeld	7.130	5.620	1.510	7.432	5.915	1.517
Weiterbildungsgeld: bei Bildungskarenz bei Entfall der Bezüge	1.551 85	917 61	634 24	1.054 55	652 42	402 13
Altersteilzeitgeld	23.424	11.103	12.321	27.784	12.791	14.993
Pensionsvorschuss	19.012	6.865	12.147	19.447	7.016	12.431
AIG-Fortbezug bei Maßnahme/Schulung	12.620	7.016	5.604	12.592	7.156	5.436
NH-Fortbezug bei Maßnahme/Schulung	12.364	6.023	6.341	14.286	6.945	7.341
Sonstige*	5.329	2.828	2.501	5.022	2.572	2.450
<b>Gesamt</b>	<b>275.799</b>	<b>123.513</b>	<b>152.286</b>	<b>289.912</b>	<b>129.341</b>	<b>160.571</b>

\* Z. B. Familienhospizkarenz, Arbeitsstiftungen (Schulungen).

## Ausgaben der Arbeitslosenversicherung:

	2008	2007
Arbeitslosengeld (inkl. Überbrückungshilfe)	1.196,04	1.197,57
Notstandshilfe	714,50	765,78
Übergangsgeld	77,06	79,19
Weiterbildungsgeld	15,17	7,05
Altersteilzeit	358,32	411,28
Sonstige Leistungen*	28,78	27,40
<b>Nettoauszahlung gesamt</b>	<b>2.389,87</b>	<b>2.488,27</b>
Pensionsversicherungsbeiträge**	736,55	774,58
Krankenversicherungsbeiträge** (inkl. Abgeltung der Krankenstandstage)	280,25	279,55
Unfallversicherungsbeiträge	4,49	5,00
<b>Sozialversicherung gesamt</b>	<b>1.021,29</b>	<b>1.059,13</b>
<b>Gesamtaufwand (Nettoauszahlung und SV-Beiträge)</b>	<b>3.411,16</b>	<b>3.547,40</b>

## Tagsätze 2008:

	Durchschnittliche Tagsätze (in €)		
	Gesamt	Frauen	Männer
Arbeitslosengeld	25,4	22,7	27,5
Notstandshilfe	19,5	17,0	21,3
Beihilfe zur Deckung des Lebensunterhalts	14,7	15,0	14,2

## B) Ausblick auf 2010

Nach den derzeitigen Prognosen wird die Arbeitslosigkeit 2009 zwischen 25 – 30% und von 2009 auf 2010 nochmals um 11% - 13% steigen. Da nicht mit einer Reduktion der LeistungsbezieherInnenquote zu rechnen ist, wird auch die Anzahl der Personen in Österreich, deren materielle Existenzsicherung durch die Arbeitslosenversicherung sichergestellt wird, im selben Umfang steigen.

## 2. Verhinderung von Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit:

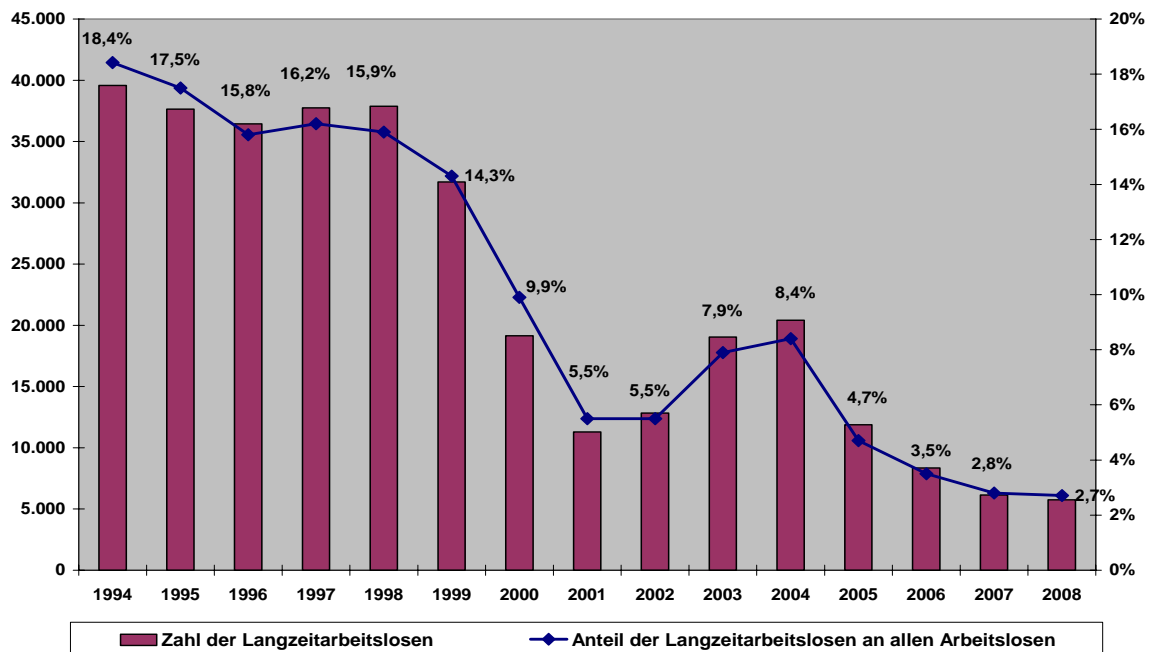
Österreich setzt schon seit längerer Zeit auf die erfolgreiche Strategie der Verhinderung von Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit durch die Verhinderung des Übertritts von Arbeitslosen in die Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit.

### A) Aktuelle Ausgangssituation

Die *Langzeitarbeitslosenquote* (nach internationaler Definition) lag im 3. Quartal 2008 mit 0,9 % deutlich unter dem Schnitt der EU Länder mit 2,5%.

Die Reduzierung bzw. Verhinderung (early intervention) von Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit<sup>3</sup> (Vormerkdauer über 12 Monate) ist als langfristiges strategisches Ziel seit langem im Längerfristigen Plan des Arbeitsmarktservice verankert. Der Erfolg dieser Strategie bis 2008 lässt sich aus der folgenden Grafik ersehen:

Beim Arbeitsmarktservice vorgemerkte Langzeitarbeitslose:



<sup>1</sup> Als lanzeitarbeitslos gelten Personen, die zumindest zwölf Monate als arbeitslos oder lehrstellensuchend gemeldet sind. Im Gegensatz zur unten stehenden Definition unterbricht z. B. ein Kurs oder eine andere Unterbrechung über 28 Tage die Dauer der Arbeitslosigkeit.

### B) Ausblick auf 2010:

Das Arbeitsmarktservice wird daher auch 2010 einen Schwerpunkt seiner Arbeitsmarktpolitik auf die Verhinderung der Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit und frühzeitige Maßnahmen für Arbeitslose richten. Dabei setzt das Arbeitsmarktservice auf die bewährte Steuerung über arbeitsmarktpolitische Zielvorgaben. Konkret sind für 2010 folgende Ziele bzw. Teilziele in Diskussion:

„Verhinderung der Verfestigung von Arbeitslosigkeit“:

Das AMS macht Betroffenen Angebote zur Beratung, Schulung und Vermittlung, damit die Arbeitslosigkeit auch in Krisenzeiten nicht länger dauert, als dies die Marktkräfte bedingen. Konkretisiert wird dieses Ziel über 4 Teilziele:

- Arbeitsaufnahmen von Älteren (> 45 Jahre) innerhalb von 6 Monaten Netto-Arbeitslosigkeit
- Übertritte Jüngerer (unter 25 Jahre) > 6 Mo.
- Übertrittsquote 12 Monate
- Arbeitsaufnahmen von Langzeitbeschäftigungslosen (das sind Personen, die im letzten Jahr nicht oder nur schlecht ins Beschäftigungssystem integriert waren, jedoch nicht unbedingt langzeitarbeitslos sein müssen )

## 3. Frauen:

### A) Aktuelle Ausgangssituation

Frauen haben durch die Mehrfachbelastung aus Familien- und Erwerbsarbeit häufig unterbrochene Erwerbskarrieren, was sich nachteilig auf ihre Positionierung am Arbeitsmarkt und in weiterer Folge auf ihre Einkommenssituation auswirkt. Kritische Punkte für die Erwerbskarriere sind der Bildungsabschluss, die Berufswahl und der Wiedereinstieg nach einer / mehreren allfälligen Babypausen. Bei diesen Meilensteinen setzt das AMS mit gezielten Angeboten für Frauen an.

Seit dem Jahr 2000 wird bei der Planung und Durchführung von Förderangeboten der Ansatz des Gender-Mainstreamings konsequent umgesetzt (Integration einer geschlechtssensiblen Perspektive – Berücksichtigung unterschiedlicher Situationen und Bedürfnisse von Frauen und Männern – Überprüfung auf geschlechtsspezifische Wirkungen). Die Strategie des Gender-Mainstreamings wird im Rahmen des ESF-Programmes und der Jahresziele jeweils durch einen frauenspezifischen Schwerpunkt ergänzt.

Im Bereich Arbeitsmarktförderungen wird ein überproportionaler Teil für Frauen verwendet – Frauen machen an den Vorgemerkten rund 44 % aus, jedoch werden rd. 50 % des Budgets für sie aufgewandt.

Mit einem eigenen Programm „Frauen in Handwerk und Technik“ fördert das Arbeitsmarktservice Frauen und Mädchen dabei, ihr Berufswahlspektrum zu erweitern und auch nichttraditionelle Berufe zu ergreifen.

#### B) Ausblick auf 2010

Das Arbeitsmarktservice unterstützt Frauen mit Betreuungspflichten, damit ihnen der (Wieder)einstieg ins Arbeitsleben gelingt. Einerseits mit der Kinderbetreuungsbeihilfe, die die Kosten einer Fremdbetreuung bezahlbar macht, andererseits über die finanzielle Unterstützung des Aufbaus von Betreuungseinrichtungen in den ersten Jahren. Vor allem im ländlichen Raum besteht nach wie vor ein hoher Bedarf an Kinderbetreuungseinrichtungen. Eine aktive, fördernde Haltung und niederschwellige Informationsangebote unterstützen die rechtzeitige Planung der Rückkehr in den Beruf. Mit dem Programm „Wiedereinstieg unterstützen“ setzt das AMS Standards für Information, Beratung und Betreuung von Wiedereinsteigerinnen in allen Geschäftsstellen.

#### **4. Jugendliche:**

Jugendliche stellen einen zentralen Schwerpunkt der Arbeitsmarktpolitik des AMS dar, da eine fundierte berufliche Erstausbildung die Basis für eine erfolgreiche Berufskarriere ist und es in Österreich einen starken Zusammenhang von Arbeitslosigkeit und Ausbildungsniveau gibt.

#### A) Aktuelle Ausgangssituation

Die Arbeitslosigkeit Jugendlicher (15-24 Jahre) ist im internationalen Vergleich weiterhin sehr niedrig. Die internationale *Jugendarbeitslosenquote* in Österreich lag 2008 mit 7,5% nach wie vor deutlich unter dem europäischen Durchschnitt (EU-25) von 15,5% Lediglich die Niederlande weisen eine niedrigere Jugendarbeitslosenquote aus.

So hat sich die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit seit 2000 (28.000) – trotz massiver Gegensteuerung durch das AMS – bis 2005 (41.000) stark erhöht, ging bis 2008 wiederum deutlich zurück (34.000) und weist seither wieder eine stark steigende Tendenz auf (Anstieg im ersten Quartal 2009 um 32%).

Die Entwicklung für Jugendliche am Arbeitsmarkt erforderte einen sukzessiven Ausbau der Maßnahmen des Auffangnetzes für Lehrstellen suchende Jugendliche gemäß Jugendausbildungssicherungsgesetz sowie die Durchführung jugendspezifischer Qualifizierungs- und Beschäftigungsprogramme in diesem Zeitraum, die um spezielle Lehrlingsförderungen für Betriebe erweitert wurden.

## Arbeitsmarktförderung des AMS für junge Menschen 15 – 24 Jahre

Zahlung (in Mio. €)	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Beschäftigung</b>	37,68	31,96	36,70	35,65	31,33
<b>Qualifizierung</b>	181,78	167,32	264,39	296,58	329,72
<b>Unterstützung</b>	6,46	8,31	9,77	11,75	11,62
<b>Beihilfe</b>	<b>225,92</b>	<b>207,59</b>	<b>310,85</b>	<b>343,98</b>	<b>372,7</b>

### B) Ausblick auf 2010

Das Arbeitsmarktservice wird angesichts der prognostizierten weiter steigenden Arbeitsmarktrisiken für Jugendliche seinen Beitrag zur Sicherung der beruflichen Erstausbildung im Rahmen der „Ausbildungsgarantie für Jugendliche“ leisten. Im Rahmen dieser Ausbildungsgarantie wird allen Jugendlichen, die eine Lehrausbildung wünschen und die für diese geeignet sind, aber keine Lehrstelle finden, eine kursmäßige Lehrausbildung angeboten.

Eine weitere Priorität hat die Verhinderung von Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit von Jugendlichen. Auch 2010 wird dies ein Schwerpunkt der Arbeitsmarktpolitik des AMS sein, mit dem Ziel, dass so gut wie kein/e Jugendliche/r länger als 6 Monate arbeitslos wird, da sie/er rasch auf einen Arbeitsplatz vermittelt oder in eine arbeitsmarktpolitische Maßnahme einbezogen wird. Dabei wird auch auf eine zukunfts- und bedarfsorientierte Qualifizierung von Jugendlichen – unter Einbeziehung der betrieblichen Anforderungen – geachtet werden.. Qualifizierung wird zur Vermeidung von längerfristiger Arbeitslosigkeit der Vorrang gegenüber Orientierungs- und Aktivierungsmaßnahmen gegeben werden.

### **5. Ältere:**

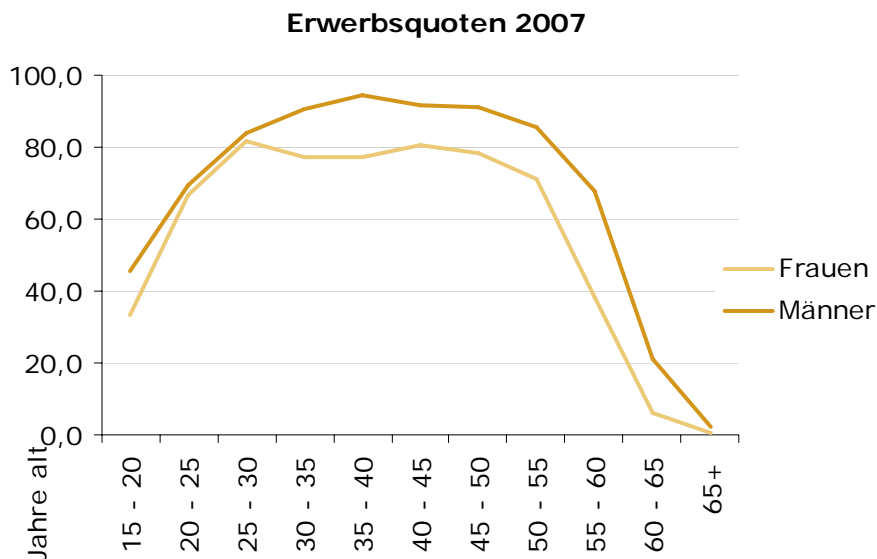
Durch die steigende Lebenserwartung und ein demographisch bedingtes geringeres Arbeitskräfteangebot wächst die Notwendigkeit, die Arbeitskräfte länger produktiv im Erwerbsleben zu halten. Die Beschäftigung von Älteren ist natürlich auch eine soziale Frage, darüber hinaus aber schlichtweg eine wirtschaftliche Notwendigkeit.

#### A) Aktuelle Ausgangssituation

Das Thema Erwerbsbeteiligung von Älteren ist auf europäischer Ebene im Rahmen der beschäftigungspolitischen Leitlinien als Zielsetzung abgebildet: Im Jahr 2010 soll die Beschäftigungsquote Älterer (hier 55 bis 64 Jährige) 50 % betragen. Österreich liegt derzeit erst bei 38,6 % (bei Männern bei 49,8 % und bei Frauen bei 28 %).



## Erwerbsquoten nach Altersgruppen in Österreich, 2007



Quelle: WIFO-Berechnungen

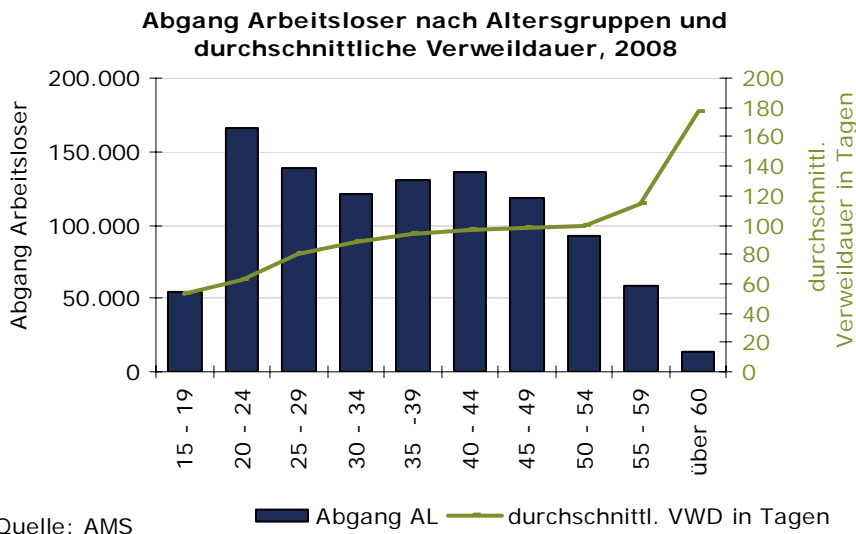
Für Frauen und Männer gilt, dass auch eine angemessene Beteiligung an beruflicher Weiterbildung ihre Erwerbsposition und ihr Einkommen sichert. Erwerbssicherung ist gleichzeitig auch finanzielle Absicherung im Alter.

Ein Indikator zur Messung der Teilhabe am Lebensbegleitendem Lernen bezieht sich auf die Bildungsbeteiligung der Bevölkerung. Österreich liegt mit 12,8 % sowohl über dem Mittelwert der EU-25 von 10,3 % als auch über dem Zielwert bis 2010 von 12,5 %.

Das Arbeitsmarktservice ist bei der Arbeitsvermittlung mit den Benachteiligungen bestimmter Personengruppen konfrontiert. Hier zeigt sich, dass mit steigendem Alter die Abgangswahrscheinlichkeit in Arbeit abnimmt und parallel dazu die Dauer der Arbeitslosigkeit steigt.

Jüngere sind zwar häufiger von Arbeitslosigkeit betroffen – diese dauert aber kürzer als bei Älteren. Die Gefahr der Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit ist bei Älteren also größer.

## Abgang Arbeitsloser(AL) nach Alter( absolut) und Verweildauer (VWD) in Tagen



### B) Ausblick auf 2010

Die Verhinderung der Verfestigung von Arbeitslosigkeit ist die zentrale Aufgabe der Arbeitsmarktpolitik, weil die negativen Folgewirkungen für die ganze Gesellschaft mit steigender Dauer der Ausgrenzung vom Arbeitsmarkt zunehmen. Die strategische arbeitsmarktpolitische Antwort ist die Schaffung von Anreizen, um die Beschäftigungschancen der Älteren zu erhöhen. Dazu zählen speziell Beschäftigungsbeihilfen und Qualifizierungsangebote des AMS. In der aktuellen ESF-Periode 2007 – 2013 ist „Active/Productive Aging“ eine zentrale Strategie über alle Schwerpunkte. Damit erfüllt das AMS auch eine wichtige gesellschaftliche Ausgleichsfunktion: durch die besondere Förderung der Weiterbildung von Älteren (wie auch generell von gering Qualifizierten) wird vorhandenen Benachteiligungen entgegengewirkt. Konkrete Zielsetzungen sind unter dem Punkt „Verhinderung von Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit“ angeführt.

## **6. Behinderte:**

### A) Aktuelle Ausgangssituation

Von den im Jahr 2008 jahresdurchschnittlich vorgemerkten 212.253 Personen weisen 31.263 bzw. 15 % eine Behinderung auf (begünstigte behinderte Personen nach Bundes- und/oder Landesgesetz sowie darüber hinaus Personen mit gesundheitlichen Vermittlungseinschränkungen lt. AMS-Definition). Die Veränderung zum Jahr 2007 betrug – 5 % bei allen Arbeitslosen, bei den Behinderten jedoch nur – 0,4 %. Das heißt, der Zugang in das Erwerbsleben und der Verbleib im Erwerbsleben waren für diese Personengruppen trotz Förderungen erschwert. Der Anteil von Frauen an allen Personen mit Behinderung beträgt 38%. Arbeitslose Personen mit Behinderung finden schwerer eine Beschäftigung. Im Falle einer Behinderung mündet nur knapp jeder dritte Abgang aus Arbeitslosigkeit in eine Beschäftigung, während bei allen Arbeitslosen jeder zweite Abgang (51 %) zu einer Beschäftigungsaufnahme führt. Bei 37.545 Arbeitsaufnahmen von als arbeitslos vorgemerkten Personen mit Behinderung im Jahr 2008 wurden insgesamt 10.650 Beschäftigungsförderungen eingesetzt, womit mehr als jede vierte Arbeitsaufnahme mit dem Einsatz von Fördermitteln zustande kam.

## B) Ausblick auf 2010

Konkrete Zielsetzungen sind unter dem Punkt Langzeitbeschäftigungslosigkeit subsumiert. Wie bei allen anderen zielgruppenspezifischen Segmentierungen besteht auch bei Behinderten das Generalziel der Verkürzung der Arbeitslosigkeit durch Integration in das Beschäftigungssystem. Dass diese Strategie für Problemgruppen auch besondere Interventionen und entsprechende Budgetmittel erfordert, wird aus den oben genannten Zahlen deutlich.