

Preparing young people for real jobs in bakeries

Austria – Caritas

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

A bakery in Upper Austria and Caritas have organized Backma's, a project that provides vocational on-the-job training for adolescents with disabilities. Under the supervision of mentors, the apprentices acquire practical skills in the production of pastries in a full-fledged working bakery in Linz so that they are then able to find employment in the open labour market.

“Backma's provides an opportunity for persons with disabilities – and all disadvantaged persons in general – to acquire the professional qualification needed to find a job in the open labour market.”

— Ms. Eva-Maria Rechberger, Caritas Linz

FACTS & FIGURES

- 25 apprenticeship places in total have been provided until the end of 2015
- All the participants can stay with the project for minimum of three and a maximum of four years.
- Three Caritas staff are supporting the trainees at the company.

PROBLEMS TARGETED

Adolescents with disabilities face many difficulties when it comes to entering the open labour market. Some lack skills in spelling or mathematics or are not mature enough to start regular work. After finishing school, these young people need support to engage in further education so they can go on to hold regular jobs, as work is an important factor for social inclusion.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

The vocational training is conducted in a bakery in Bioholzofenbäckerei GmbH Gragger in Ansfelden (province of Upper Austria). Initially, six persons with disabilities were educated and trained, but today Caritas provides ten apprenticeships. Three trainers are supporting the trainees to ensure sustainable and quality training: two are responsible for professional competences and one for social expertise. Acquiring an apprenticeship certificate or a partial qualification is the main goal of the project. Notably, there is no cost to the bakery because the project employs the trainees just as it does the three trainers. As such, the relationship is a good deal for the bakery; and in return, the trainees are part of a real working business and get the chance to demonstrate their skills in the

open labour market. The adolescents are also encouraged to be self-advocates and to express their wishes and concerns to the bakery manager, as necessary. The project partner produces only biological goods and emphasizes sustainability. Being responsible and protecting the environment is one of the important values that are also taught within the training. Caritas Linz is running similar projects with a local supermarket chain.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

Because of the success of the project, there is a plan to transfer the concept internationally. Furthermore, the Linz bakery has designed a special energy-efficient oven that operates without electricity and gas, which thus meets the needs of countries (especially emerging nations) with high energy costs. Construction on a bakery in Senegal, for example, started in September 2015.

Photo: Yes

CONTACT

Caritas für Menschen mit Behinderungen

Mag. Wolfgang Scheidl

Österreich

<http://www.gragger.at/ueber-gragger/menschen> (in German)

+43 732 7973682831

wolfgang.scheidl@caritas-linz.at

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