



HELPING BUSINESSES THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC WITH TARGETED SUPPORT IN ALL AREAS OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT.

IBB on-demand (Impulsberatung für Betriebe)

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AUSTRIA

The practice primarily addresses challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic that affect enterprises, particularly the management of their personnel. Because of mobility restrictions and physical distancing regulations, IBB on-demand complements on-site IBB counselling with online and telephone counselling conducted by external counselling services.

Name of the PES	AMS (Arbeitsmarktservice)
Scope of measure (a pilot project or a national reform)	National
When was the practice implemented?	IBB on-demand was started in 2020 and is expected to last until 2022.
What was the driver for introducing the practice? Was it internal or external?	The practice was implemented as additional support to employers confronted with new challenges and difficulties arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in relation to the protection of workplaces, the training of staff, and the recruitment of new personnel. Since on-site counselling had become impossible due to mobility restrictions, the AMS developed IBB on-demand to maintain targeted counselling services for employers.
Which organisation was involved in its implementation?	AMS commissions dedicated external consulting companies, bound by a contract, to provide targeted counselling to employers.
Which groups were targeted by the practice?	Small and micro-sized enterprises as well as medium and large companies. Employers can take advantage of the practice regardless of their experienced difficulty.
What were the practice's main objectives?	IBB on-demand cooperates with external private counselling services to address the challenges that enterprises are encountering due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
What activities were carried out?	Individual counselling and coaching via phone and/or digital channels, training and information material as well as an intranet toolbox. The counselling service is split into four consecutive phases, starting with (1) the initial consultation, followed by (2) an assessment of the enterprise's current situation. The third phase (3) consists of figuring out the correct measures that meet the individual employers' needs. The last phase (4) aims at finding a path to ensure the sustainability of the implemented measures.
What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?	The employers' service (SfU – Service für Unternehmen) of AMS informed and advised companies about using the services. ÖSB Consulting GmbH, in cooperation with Deloitte Human Capital, are responsible for the other steps.

What were the source(s) of funding?	The AMS budget.
What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?	Between February 2020 and June 2021, 1 817 enterprises participated in the programme and received support. Among these, 36% were SMEs (with one to ten employees), 46% had eleven to 50 employees, 15% between 51 and 250 employees, and 3% were large companies with more than 250 employees.
What outcomes have been identified?	A key result is the intensified cooperation and exchange between AMS and employers as well as improved cooperation and exchange between employers in the form of network events. In addition, the enterprises improved the skills and competences of their staff. These were related to the following areas, in which positive developments are expected: retaining and attracting staff (49% of participating enterprises), qualification and training (29%), securing jobs and reducing “staff fluctuation” (13%), productive ageing generation management, i.e., the transfer of knowledge between older staff and newly recruited ones (6%), diversity and integration of migrants (1%), and gender and equal opportunities (2%).
What are the lessons learnt and success factors?	AMS quickly made an offer available for companies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Companies were supported quickly and effectively despite the existing restrictions.



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