

Flagship Agency Study: German Report

An agency in times of transition: the “Bauhof” in Halle

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Introduction

Our study could be placed within the wider frame of the debate on current challenges and new models of welfare which has developed in Germany in a lively way over the past few years and intensified since the election in September 1998. In this context the concept of “activating social policy”, only recently introduced in Germany, is becoming more and more prominent – and has been embraced by the new Federal Government of Chancellor Schroeder. New metaphors act as symbolic condensations of

this new approach and style of social policy. The old image of the “social safety net” (passively relied upon and taken for granted) has gradually acquired more negative connotations and the new metaphor of the “trampoline” has been put forward as a more apt image. It suggests that social policy should function as a resource enabling its ‘clients’ to take an active leap out of their present difficulties, “the trampoline” of the welfare state providing them with a ‘second chance’ to participate more successfully in society. This metaphor sums up the attempt to change the ‘philosophy’ behind the German welfare state, which is principally based on the concept of security, but also charity and social justice. In their place, a new emphasis has been put on encouraging - even forcing - people to engage actively in solving their ‘own’ problems, i.e. on reducing individual welfare dependence. Persistently high rates of unemployment throughout Europe and the political determination to cut welfare spending provide the economic context and a significant driving force behind these conceptual and policy shifts. The kinds of ‘activating social policy’ and practical measures differ widely across the political spectrum, from a neo-liberal, targetted, and ultimately: authoritarian approach at one end to more egalitarian ideas, centring on individual needs at the other end.

Not surprisingly, voices opposed to these new developments in social policy have been raised mainly on the left by the traditional wing of the Social Democratic Party and trade unions. They accept the desirability of integrating activation measures into the welfare armoury but emphasise the continuing need to provide ‘security and support’ for those who are not able to ‘take the leap’ and thus cannot seize opportunities provided by the new welfare ‘trampoline’. All in all, the dividing line in the debate is not politically clear-cut but runs right through the political parties.

It can be said that SOSTRIS has a distinct stance on the issue. From the outset, this project has focused on individuals’ own capacities and resources to deal with situations of risk in their lives. Our motives for doing so are theoretically based and linked to the scientific need to provide adequate description and analysis. They are also inspired by notions of ‘empowerment’ and ‘individual dignity’. Therefore, we do not endorse the view which ascribes resources to individuals, which can then be ‘activated’ or retrieved, according to crude superimposed categories of gender or age.

The positive focus of the project on individuals’ resources and activities is mirrored in the biographical methodology that SOSTRIS has adopted. Since we did not set out explicitly to do research on “activation policy”, our research results are relevant to the debates around this issue and provide additional support to a case-study based approach and the existing activities along these lines. Our research in six groups exposed to

different kinds of risks has also shown that 'passivity' was not the main problem in the cases investigated and thus, strategies of 'activation' are not necessarily the most appropriate. Instead, we found rather problematic biographical dynamics characterised by high (in some cases even hyper-) activity, based on understanding and orientation derived from the old society, which have not adapted to the new one. In the light of our case studies, the term 'activation' has to be more rigorously defined in relation to specific contexts within the broad field of social policy. This is the purpose of a conference to be held in Halle in March 1999 entitled 'Coping with Risk in a Society in Transformation: Perspectives of Activating Social Policy'. In five working groups covering five of our fields of investigation: (young people without qualifications, lone parents, early retired persons, migrants, and the long-term unemployed) scholars will discuss with politicians and representatives of best practice projects, the opportunities and limitations of activating social policy in those fields.

This report will focus on a flagship project dealing with young people without qualifications. The goals of the project are to qualify its 'clients' for the labour market and integrate them into the world of work. Our choice of a youth-centred project for detailed observation has, in retrospect, turned out to be a good one for various reasons:

- youth unemployment, and especially of those with interrupted school careers, is one of the main challenges for social policy in the Halle region, which underwent a massive industrial collapse in the wake of the German unification and is now suffering from one of the highest unemployment rates in Germany.

- with regard to the other categories in SOSTRIS, the specificity of this category is, that the majority of this age group was not fully socialised in the GDR and thus cannot continue the process of transformation with action strategies established previously. They have to confront deep social change in their formative years, mostly - as our research in this category revealed - in very difficult family situations marked by violence, addiction and parental unemployment.

- different aspects of 'activity' are represented in this category. We can find patterns of passivity, marked by waiting to see what will happen rather than actively structuring a 'career'. We also find patterns of high activity, aimed at finding a 'solution' to situations of familial violence which have subsequently been carried forward and led to further difficulties and exclusion, that are extremely hard to overcome. The crucial question here is how to change powerful patterns of action, which are, however, highly problematic and inadequate, rather than getting these young people to be 'active' per

se.

The 'flagship' chosen for an in-depth case study for this report is the "Bauhof", an umbrella organisation housing different projects, currently sponsored by the Protestant Church of Halle. The projects are funded by different national and international public institutions, e.g. the city of Halle, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Saxony-Anhalt region, the Ministry of Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Juveniles, the European Social Fund, as well as private donors such as the Bank of Bavaria and Ikea. The Bauhof currently comprises a staff of about 40 and serves a clientele of 150 mainly young participants in the different projects.

The project is widely regarded as innovative and successful - as an example of 'best practice'. It has expanded rapidly during the six years of its existence, indicating a successful path of development. Its educational concerns fitted with the biographical approach of Sostris which considers the development of the whole person, using case study methods and group interaction. We were curious to find out how these programmatic aims would turn out in practice.

This report is structured in five parts: 1. a portrait of the public self-presentation of the project 2. an analysis of its structure 3. an analysis of the work with 'clients', 4. future plans and possible developments, and 5. an evaluation of the whole project as a 'Flagship-Agency'.

The analysis is based on:

- 15 interviews (one - a narrative including the personal biography of the overall head of the project, the others - thematically structured narrative interviews with members of staff)
- biographical interviews with six young participants in different Bauhof- projects
- documentary material (applications, annual reports, newsletter articles, etc.)
- participant observation of a variety of project related activities (staff assembly, interactions in the daily life of different projects, participation in the annual summer festivals etc.)

1 The Self-Presentation of the 'Bauhof' Project - a Portrait

The self-presentation of the project is summarised in a picture of a house with three pillars, representing the main categories of activity within the project. In the basement and on the roof you find information about the principal aspects as well as additional activities of the whole enterprise. A banner running along the roof in the front locates

the project symbolically within the Christian tradition by citing Matthew 5, 16: 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven'.

As the name 'Jugendwerkstatt Bauhof' implies ('youth workshop' with the connotation of a building site as well as a builders' yard), the project is based on work-centred measures, addressing young people between the ages of 16 and 27 with poor qualifications, who risk losing their way owing to physical or mental limitations such as: social isolation and loneliness

poverty and unemployment

homelessness, violence and addiction

stigmatisation and exclusion

migration and xenophobia. (cited from the folder)

1.1 The 'Three Pillars' and their Projects

The three main 'pillars' offer different opportunities at different levels: 'employment', 'qualifications' and 'training'. Ideally, a young unemployed person having left school without any certificate could end up completing an apprenticeship in the Bauhof by passing through different projects under the 'three pillars'.

The first pillar ('employment') includes an open workshop for about 25 young people which aims at initiating or supporting a process of re-integration in a regular working environment. Participation is not compulsory. The participants get a small financial allowance, which is not a wage or compensation for work, but an incentive for them to attend. It is paid every day to all participants who stay at least four hours on the project premises. The main goal of this module within the Bauhof is plainly to get youngsters off the street, into a setting where they find incentives, and are deterred from pursuing less socially desirable activities. It is the gateway or hinge between the uncontrollable world of the street (and illegality) and the more orderly world of society (and legality).

Currently, the 'Open Workshop' has been replaced by the so-called S.T.E.P. project: (Schooling and Training Programme under the EU project) based on § 13 of the German Children and Youth Support Law (KJHG) and funded through the EU's 'School of the Second Chance' programme. While the 'Open Workshop' was just offering an opportunity without any obligation and thus also attracted those with more severe problems of dealing with authority by allowing them to come and go at liberty, the S.T.E.P. project is more structured and targets a different clientele. The young participants are selected 3, for a limited number of places and a compulsory timetable

operates. So the participants are members of a programme with certain rights and corresponding responsibilities. The Bauhof does not offer a low-level 'no-obligations' programme equivalent to the 'Open -Workshop' at the moment⁴. As we will discuss later, this could mark a significant change in the development of the Bauhof and represents a divergence between its stated goals and their implementation in practice.

The second pillar representing qualifications consists of projects for 'professional orientation'. The participants, mainly long-term unemployed young people on benefit, get a job contract for one or two years maximum with compulsory hours and a regular salary. The aim of these projects is to improve the chances for long term unemployed young people to re-enter the secondary or even primary labour market by developing their skills in specific areas as well as by habitualising them to work discipline. It is possible to become a painter or carpenter, or to gain qualifications in metal-working, welding, gardening, or information technology. Some of the contracts are financed by the employment office under the ABM job creation scheme, others by the European Social Fund. Social-worker support forms an integral part of these projects.

Finally, the third pillar representing training includes vocational training - three years apprenticeships as a painter or carpenter in the 'Bauhof' workshops as well as a stint at technical college. The participants in these vocational training courses are young people who have completed the necessary steps prior to vocational training but have not been accepted for apprenticeship in the private sector or in other state-sponsored programmes. The work on these projects is also supported by social workers. The projects are funded under federal, as well as regional employment promotion measures.

The three 'pillars' form the principles that underly the foundation of the Bauhof- 'house': all projects under the three pillars are social-worker supported, in accordance with the general aim of the project to work with young people from difficult family backgrounds, who have consequently undergone difficulties in their educational careers. The social workers' tasks are to develop tailor-made individual support schemes for the participants at a case-specific level, to oversee inter-agency cooperation and to manage the bureaucratic interface with participants as well as their personal problems. The second key principle is to include young people from other countries who live in Halle (mostly Africans) in every project in order to facilitate direct interaction between the German participants and 'others', and thereby counteract the xenophobic and right wing political culture among young Germans.

1.2 Other Projects and Activities

In addition to the 'pillar-projects' which constitute the core of the Bauhof and aim to provide young people with professional qualifications combined with social support, there is a range of other activities linked to the Bauhof and located on their premises. In the graphic self-presentation of the Bauhof as a 'house', these activities are visualised in the roof:

- a furniture recycling project; second-hand furniture is collected, restored and then sold off cheap mainly to people on benefit. The staff are paid on the basis of job promotion contracts (ABM). This is the only Bauhof project which produces marketable goods and the only one independent of external funding .
- unemployment counselling; the staff are also employed under job promotion measures (ABM). Besides organising computer training and training in applications, the counsellor's main function has increasingly shifted to administering the numerous applications under the ABM job promotion scheme for Bauhof staff, whose jobs are also largely dependent on this source of funding.
- "community work"; young people convicted of misdemeanours are often required to work a certain number of hours "in the interest of the community". Among other possible places, they can pay their debt to society at the Bauhof, where they work under the supervision of a social worker. This project is funded by the regional Ministry of Justice.
- computer courses: directed mainly at unqualified young women, these courses aim to make participants computer literate, and thereby boost their chances of regular employment.
- leisure time: the Bauhof recreational and sports facilities are also open to the general public and the Bauhof offers them access to sports courses.
- several "multicultural" initiatives are organised during the year in co-operation with other projects and institutions in Halle.
- an advice centre for immigrants and asylum-seekers provides legal and practical advice about work, housing, etc.
- language courses for immigrants, especially returnee ethnic Germans or Jews from Eastern Europe, but also former Vietnamese contract workers who decided to remain in Germany as well as refugees from current conflict zones (Turkey, Bosnia, different parts of Africa).
- the "Playhouse" (Spielehaus).- a centre for communication and multicultural exchange
- finally, the Bauhof maintains co-operation with counterparts in the Czech Republic, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe.

2 The Structure of the Project

Based on the analysis of interviews with 15 collaborators on the project, we have detected three basic elements that form the structuring principles of the Bauhof: dependence on *project funding* and thus different funding regimes, which not only determines the projects, but also the future of most of the Bauhof collaborators. This forces the entire Bauhof to operate within a short-term perspective, which periodically threatens the continuation of individual projects. It sets up a centrifugal dynamic which risks cutting off each individual project in its own little world. This dynamic is still under control due to the strong *management* of the project overall and personal dedication by its head, Mr Heyroth. He has been part of a small group which developed the idea in 1991-1992 and then had started to put it into practice step by step. His background personal experience of the historical transition of GDR society as well as his religious commitment have been decisive features of his integrating role as head of the project. Finally, *the structure of the staff*, composed mainly of people with a GDR background from different professional fields, mostly outside of the educational field. For most of them, aged between 35 to 50, the Bauhof represents the opportunity to maintain job continuity, even though they had to change professional field and their current employment status remains precarious. Most of them have fixed-term one year contracts and the prospects of extending them are uncertain.

2.1 The Structure of Funding

This brief portrait of the Bauhof with its many individual projects might give the impression of a wide variety of activities. At first glance this impressive diversity is not only due to an internal process of development but to the need to raise funds which makes it completely project-oriented. Since the Bauhof, as an institution, has no guaranteed revenue provided by the state or any other institution, the continuity of the whole enterprise depends on putting forward new projects. These, in turn, are subject to different regimes - regulations, conditions and time frames according to the funding bodies. These include:-

- the City of Halle
- the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Saxony-Anhalt region
- the local office of the Federal Employment Agency
- the Federal Ministry of Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Juveniles,
- the European Social Fund (ESF)

Compliance with the guidelines of these organisations for filling in applications, report-back, spending and accounts as well as with their rules of eligibility for participants or recipients and staff recruitment is of crucial importance, since many individual programmes do not run for more than a year at a time.

Thus, the various relevant funding regimes and bodies to which they are related become a key reference point for each individual Bauhof project and its staff

- the future of Bauhof projects and staff directly depends on the funding structure
- the prestige of the project overall depends on performance but also on the number of individual projects it gets funded, and on the range of funders it attracts. This, in turn, influences the chances of accessing privileged funding schemes (Regelförderung), which involve considerably less administrative effort and promise security in the longer-term. Consequently, social workers are forced to devote, in our opinion, a disproportionate amount of their time to technical administration, not only on current projects, but also in preparing applications for follow-up projects, be they a continuation or renewal of existing programmes or venture into further fields of activity or for new sponsors.
- in contrast with the scientific professional field, with which it shares many features, in this case the effects are directly transferred to the clients.
- there is a danger of shifting the orientation of the institution (or a personal one) to the priorities set by funding bodies, to the detriment of its strategic goals and preferences (heteronomy).
- the legal basis for the different kinds of funding is complex- and shifting!
e.g. the conditions for eligibility and award of contracts under job promotion schemes;
- the European Social Fund (ESF) funding is a case in point of a complicated set of conditions, which are difficult to fulfil, with project supervision imposed from Berlin which is costly but ineffective in improving performance. However, as a positive side-effect, ESF encourages the formulation of creative projects such as the ABM job promotion schemes
- the centrifugal dynamic imposed by the different 'logics', goals and conditions of different funding regimes. Staff are dependent on extending 'their' project since they are not paid by the Bauhof as the umbrella organisation but by the funding institution for the specific project.
- on the positive side, again this promotes creative project construction and management.

2.2 *The Management in the Context of the History and Narrative of the Project.*

The dynamics of funding as a 'project-regime' make the task of maintaining the coherence of the project overall and fulfilling its goals, a difficult but crucial one. Under these conditions, the project head, with the support of a few, has the complicated task of maintaining a minimum of continuity. Thus, the dynamics of the project call for leadership and personal qualities of modesty combined with charisma in the individual holding this post. Our interviews with the staff and clients as well as our participant observation revealed clearly that the project head serves as the central point of reference for the staff (despite expressions of discontent and conflicts) and for the young participants in the project. Three interrelated factors seem to account for this: an ongoing personal commitment to and involvement in the project as a whole, his biographical background of links with the GDR and the transformation process after 1989 and last, but not least, his religious convictions. How these aspects are connected is illustrated by the history and narrative of the project as recounted by Mr. H in the interview conducted with him in May 1998.

2.2.1 *The History of the Project*

The initial idea for the project was developed by a small group of the local leaders of the Protestant Church in Halle of which Mr H. was a member. The group perceived unemployment as the most challenging problem in the process of societal transformation since it had been unknown - in this form - in the GDR. Firstly, a group of three people considered the phenomenon theoretically but soon started to visit projects initiated by the Protestant Church in the 'old Länder' to get an idea of how to deal with the situation practically. This experience strengthened their conviction of the need to give a signal that something was being done in Halle, following the motto 'better to light a candle in the dark than to complain about it' - even if it might only be 'a drop in the ocean'. Initially the issue of unemployment was addressed abstractly but after learning from the literature about its long-lasting impact on young people's lives, the idea of a youth project emerged.

One member of the group at that time was a local commissioner for foreigners and put forward the idea of countering xenophobia in the project. A context of working together was regarded as ideal for facilitating exchange between German and non-German youth. From here the second goal of the project developed. When the proposal was written it found an 'open door' at the Ministry of Social Affairs of Saxony-Anhalt

and the project was initiated almost immediately, with a group of 15 young people and a staff of five professionals: two **youth and community workers**, two social workers and Mr H. as the head.

The Bauhof was offered premises in the 'Franckesche Stiftungen', which was regarded as the most suitable place for the project to be located. This Protestant foundation 6 was at that time about to change its legal status according to the new system and was open to new projects.

Subsequently, they selected the professional fields in which qualifications were to be offered and additional funding was raised via private firms such as the Bank of Bavaria and Ikea which contributed substantial donations that enabled the Bauhof to buy equipment and build a new workshop.

2.2.2 The Project's Story as Told by its Initiator and Head

According to the project data, the narrative of its history was presented as a story of success, albeit modest. Only one difficulty that the project encountered was mentioned: the hesitation of the employment office to include young foreigners in the project. It was argued, that - given the extremely high level of unemployment in the region - German clients had to be served first before measures for unemployed foreigners could be undertaken. This barrier was overcome in the end by convincing the head of the local employment office of the need, because of the xenophobic violence in the region especially of young people. And thus, this difficulty was also turned into a success.

In response to the first question in the interview⁷ Mr H. recounted the personal change in his career in his narrative of the project. Under the GDR, Mr H. had studied agriculture and worked in the food industry. After his enterprise closed down in 1991 he was forced, like so many others, to find a new job. He took this situation as an opportunity for a radical career break and - after discussing the matter at length with his family - decided to take the risk, even though he was 45 years old. The decision was influenced by his religious conviction and previous involvement in the church in the GDR and was therefore experienced partly as a continuation of that. Mr H. viewed the change positively as giving him the opportunity to work more in accordance with his personal preferences than had been the case before in his managerial and administrative job where he was not 'in touch with people' as much. The opportunity to complete social work training in three years alongside his work on the project equipped him with the knowledge and skills required in his new job.

The project was thus also a new beginning in Mr. H's personal as well as professional life. This link between his own biographical transition and that of the

society, his willingness to take risks and face up to challenges, may also explain his high level commitment to the project and determination to manage it well. We would even argue, that under the aegis of the Protestant Church in a traditional educational setting such as the Franckesche Stiftungen, Mr H. was able to create, for himself and others on the staff, a new social space with the Bauhof project, which allowed them to reintegrate and transform their past in the present, new and very different situation. This process has many different layers. We would like to focus on the significance of religion and the link to Hermann August Francke's educational philosophy which addressed the 'whole person' and seeks to develop the individual through work. In our view these are the key elements of the project ethos which account for its inner coherence, and inform, along with modern, secular principles of social work - its educational theory and practice.

1) The religious influence makes itself felt in the concept of charity as a motivating force to help the fallen and the weak. Furthermore, the Christian conception, which Mr H. relates, of giving priority to 'good deeds' over 'good faith', i.e. of doing good, is at least as important as believing in good. These elements fit in easily with socialist ideals and thus could even have served a basis at a philosophical level for feeling integrated in the GDR. We would even venture the hypothesis, that renewed religious belief provided normative continuity to the process of social, as well as biographical, transition. Thus, religion had played a dual role in providing: firstly a normative basis for the desire to change career with all the risks and challenges that entailed, and secondly at least some biographical continuity by integrating some old religious beliefs associated with the 'socialist' world with new a religious orientation. In other words: the religious sphere, which rather than being devalued in the process of transformation - has, on the contrary, acquired a positive association with 'opposition' - has facilitated change by maintaining some continuity.

2) The allusion to August Hermann Francke, a well known 16th century Protestant educational reformer serves to legitimate his own work, by placing it in a tradition which has not been devalued, but rather has acquired new prescience as the educational philosophy behind the rebuilding of the 'Franckesche Stiftungen'. The main point of Francke's philosophy, strongly influenced by the Protestant Enlightenment, consisted in educating orphans through work and discipline, to strengthen their 'personality' and thus protect them from 'evil' in the world. This goal was achieved by creating a fairly self-sufficient social environment in building complex relatively cut off from the outside world, serving various purposes:- educational, living and working (schools, homes, workshops, dormitories, canteens etc.).

The concept of the 'Bauhof' embodies this 'holistic' approach by stressing the need for

social work with its clients, but also by creating a living space for at least some of the young participants in the project.

'The main thing we want to achieve here is socialisation through work, because our young people come with a variety of problems coping with life. Therefore social work support is crucial, whereas work is the medium for 'learning by doing' so to speak. Our approach to social work always tried to be a bit holistic, which includes leisure time and in principle also living.' (19ff)

At the same time the concept of 'discipline' (including measures which are nowadays seen as brutal, e.g. 'we have to break the will of the children in order to build a new and better personality') is rejected as inappropriate to the presentday. But, in our opinion, the reference to Francke's holistic concept contains a further problem: the kind of self-sufficiency and protective closeness derived from the 16th and 17th Centuries cannot be transferred to our social reality which is much more diverse. The exchange with the outside world plays a crucial role for all the participants, and not only for its head, as it was for Francke. Back then the 'clients' - mainly orphans - were set to remain 'inside' and did not have to cope with the change from the 'inside' to the 'outside'.

Mr H. seems implicitly aware of this problem, since in his talk about Francke he did not focus on the philosophical aspects, but on his managerial talent in constructing such a large project within a very short space of time, which combined both educational and management goals (including the need to raise funding).

2.3 The Staff

The staff of around forty is composed of roughly two thirds of the personnel who are responsible for the technical aspects of the project and the vocational training, and about one third social workers. (In many cases the social workers were themselves employed in a technical capacity as craftsmen or even engineers before they came to the Bauhof. They have completed a social work training in order to get the formal qualification for to be a social worker. The technical background of most of the staff seems to be a positive resource in getting in touch with the young people at a practical level.

Furthermore, most of the collaborators on the project share a GDR background with the clientele of the Bauhof projects, although there is a considerable generational variance, if not a gap, which corresponds to very different experiences. Even the staff can be divided into two age groups, of roughly equal size, the younger one of people in their early thirties, the older one in their fifties, most of whom changed profession after 1989.

By contrast, those in the younger age-group did not experience similar interruption to their career and are working in the field for which they trained. If there have been ruptures and career changes, they seem to have been self-motivated rather than a response to external events.

The most pressing problem that the staff have to deal with, is that of ensuring continuity in the face of temporary employment. Most of the employment contracts are linked to the project they are working on, and their own commitment lasts as long as the project runs: usually a year or two, although sometimes it is renewed. A person working with an ABM job promotion contract could thus, in rare cases, complete a total of five years employed on the same project with successive renewals of contract. Only about one in every ten staff has a stable contract with a longer-term perspective, i.e. without a time-limit linked to a specific programme or project. This applies to some of the staff who were involved from the start. The effects of the short-term projects and employment contracts on the staff, can hardly be overstated. On the personal side, the requisites of funding regimes are passed on to staff in the form of job insecurity. Apart from the demotivating effect it presumably has, the continual need to re-create one's own job inevitably takes up a considerable amount of time and energy. In this context 'recreating one's job' means acquiring a new project for the Bauhof or the renewal of an old one, and thus making a contribution to securing the Bauhof's future. However, this does not change the basic fact that short-term contracts and project cycles necessarily waste human resources.

A second effect which goes hand in hand with short-termism is the high turnover of staff. For one thing, it is evident that that younger, well-qualified members of staff are prone to leave institutions like the Bauhof when offered work with longer-term prospects. More importantly, even if new projects are successfully acquired, they may be very different and consequently may require other areas of competence and formal qualifications in the staff they recruit. Despite these limitations, switching from an expired project to a new one is sometimes possible, with periods of unemployment in between.

Another type of problem is related to staff training. As mentioned before, most members of the staff were recruited regionally and did not have a social work training. Even though many of the Bauhof staff are doing specific training and qualifying and more and more qualified young people leave the newly established social work schools and faculties, there is a lack of certain professional skills at Bauhof. While the vocational aspects of the Bauhof programmes are undoubtedly well catered for in terms of substantially qualified manpower, skills for dealing with difficult social and

psychological problems are rather scarce. This persists although there is an obvious need for such skills to maximise the work with clients.

Finally, the staff at the Bauhof are naturally not free of certain 'atmospheric' tensions. The issue which arouses a certain amount of discontent concerns the management structure, i.e. the balance between leadership and autonomy. This may take various forms, e.g. it may show up as a question of competence on a project: which decisions should be taken by the staff directly involved, how far are they responsible to the Bauhof management; etc.

On the other hand, the religious basis of the project does not seem to be at all problematic, even though not everybody on the staff is explicitly committed to the religious principles. Indeed some of them, not surprisingly for people who grew up in the GDR, are clearly non-religious. On the contrary, there is a perceptible sense of tolerance in these matters. People without religious beliefs acknowledge that they are treated no differently from the others and do not feel any kind of pressure to affiliate to a church. Some of them said that they had become interested in religious affairs while at the Bauhof and had gone to some events out of curiosity. Furthermore, most of the ex-GDR staff share a strong work ethic which derived from the Protestant work ethic but has since become independent of religious belief. This was also one of the moral foundations of the GDR. 'Work' is perceived as the sphere where different ideologies, beliefs and goals can be integrated. Thus, the 'philosophy' of the project is not only a means of integrating the young unemployed clients into the labour market. It also serves to integrate the micro cosmos of the Bauhof into the new social system by creating a shared ethic where 'work' is the universally valid basis for the development and affirmation of one's self. The shared value of work, and the possibility of re-affirming oneself through working may temper the experience of unemployment and help counter the more general devaluation of life in the GDR in the wake of the transformation of East Germany.

2.4 The Importance of Size for the Dynamics of the Project and its Performance

In the economy as a whole, a number of giant mergers over the last year has testified to the obsessive pursuit of size. Gains are measured in increased competitiveness, economies of scale and scope. Undoubtedly, the Bauhof has also been on a slow but steady path of expansion since its inception in 1992. How does size and growth affect the dynamics and performance of a social policy project like the Bauhof?

On the positive side, size means more manpower is involved, tasks become more varied and social relations and interactions are enriched. This implies better **synergy**, improving overall performance. A good example of the latter effect is Mrs. K., who began working at the Bauhof in the rather peripheral role of unemployment counsellor. However, her experience and expertise in legal and administrative procedures, acquired through her former duties in a GDR enterprise, were soon recognised and put to good use in the Bauhof. She is now not only giving advice to people outside the Bauhof, but is acting as employment counsellor for the Bauhof staff as well. This entails helping the less experienced to deal with the numerous formal procedures that have to be followed in order to get project funding, to propose new projects or to pursue prorogation of contracts.

A certain size is also a prerequisite for providing different, **interlocking modules** that target different groups within the clientele, tailor-made to their individual needs. For the Bauhof this means, for example, that an individual can, theoretically, go all the way from the first step of 'hanging around on the street' to a fully-blown apprenticeship, ending up with a vocational certificate by participating in different projects within the Bauhof. Thus, the Bauhof offers appropriate responses to different needs and reasonably attractive prospects for clients, which enhance their sense of continuity and purpose, benefits that also apply to the Bauhof staff.

On the negative side, however, growth has also brought a series of problems to the Bauhof:

the variety of projects endangers the 'corporate identity' i.e. shared goals, ideals and even shared past. This puts a heavy burden on the head of the project to integrate work and workers.

a growing lack of internal transparency which creates a potential for conflict and enhances the centrifugal tendencies by undermining solidarity.

possibly a tendency to avoid the more difficult areas of activity and cases (e.g. no 'open workshop' any more) and to favour more structured programmes that may be easier to plan and administer e.g. industry-wide apprenticeships - but are aimed at a clientele which is less vulnerable to exclusion

3. The 'Clients': Recruitment, Educational Programme and Main Issues

3.1 Recruitment

The Modalities of client recruitment are again dependent on the individual projects' regulations. i.e. they are only partially dependent on the Bauhof's own criteria but mostly on the criteria of the various funding institutions for which Bauhof is a service provider. As a general rule, there is a double selection process operating. First, the funding institution - or its local agent in the case of ESF-financing e.g. - selects individuals that are entitled to participate in its pro-programmes that are operated by Bauhof. Secondly, those participants are then 'screened' by the people in charge of the project at Bauhof. The screening takes place on the Bauhof premises, where the applicants are asked to come for individual interviews. The obvious purpose of this second selective threshold is to choose out of all applicants that are sent to Bauhof (in most cases from the local branch of the Federal Employment Agency) those that fit best into the pro-programme offered. However, a closer look reveals an intrinsic ambiguity that again points to structural constraints under which such projects have to work. What criteria exactly are prevailing for the in-house screening process? On the one hand side, "best fit" could be defined according to the necessities of the individuals. On the other side, those most needy of a place in the project may not be the ones with the best perspectives of successful conclusion of a programme. The sheer percentage of successful programme participants is however an important criterion for institutions that evaluate the work of the Bauhof itself - actual and potential funding institutions for example. In other words, those individuals who may profit most from insertion into a Bauhof project and those whose acceptance to the programmes may be most profitable for the Bauhof itself tend to be different. Bauhof staffers are conscious of this difficult issue and have addressed it openly in our interviews. For the time being, they seem to have managed to stick to the initial idea of the Bauhof project - to help young people in need - and to maintain their own criteria of selection even though this may not help them to comply with formal criteria of good project performance. Accordingly, the basic criteria for admission into a project is the applicant's motivation: Young people on unemployment benefit are obliged to comply with what the Employment Agency sees

fit for them in terms of work or (re-)training. i.e. they have at least to report to institutions like Bauhof if they are sent there by the Employment Agency least they risk to loose their entitlement to unemployment benefits. Some of them however prefer to stay on benefit and not to take part in educational programmes. To sort these out is one of the main tasks of the 'job interview' at Bauhof. Again, this serves both parts: the project gets people who are interested to participate and the ones who are not can continue to stay on benefit.

There is one notable exception to this way of recruitment, namely projects like the "open workshop" where the explicit goal is to attract young people from the streets to spend their time on the project premises. Therefore, there is no formal recruitment or admission in this type of project. There are only some basic rules which apply to all participants and that have to be observed (see 3.3 farther down).

Finally, to a much lesser extent, participants report to Bauhof by themselves or contact is made directly through social workers of various institutions that deal with conflictive youth.

A much more difficult question than that of the origin of the young people in the project is: where do they go to from there? Systematic tracking is not possible - which also means that monitoring the effects of a stance at Bauhof beyond the project-phase can not be done, though it would be highly interesting and relevant in order to assess the accuracy and suitability of the approach taken and the work done. From our discussions with staff, the ensuing steps after Bauhof have led ex-participants to employment, to the army', to other projects but also to jail.

3.2 Authority versus Orientation

When working with a difficult clientele like unqualified youth, there is bound to be discussion as to the most appropriate way to deal with them or to reach the proposed project goal. Basically, the different projects within the Bauhof - and the different people on the projects - tend to adhere more to one or the other end of the continuum of "Authority" vs. "Orientation". As mentioned before, the concept of "Discipline" was an important and integral part of the educational philosophy of August Hermann Francke. On the other side, the Protestant ethic is based on internal

orientations, i.e. on acquiring normative guiding lines for daily live situations and living accordingly. Therefore, both ends of the continuum do, in fact, belong together in the light of the religious tradition that partially informs the Bauhof as an educational institution.

This historical duality of "authority" or "discipline" and "orientation" is still acting today. While many measures and the strong social worker support in the projects are geared towards working on the clients orientations and motivations and towards helping them to come to terms with themselves and their circumstances, some members of the staff have told us, that on the bottom line, what was really required of them was to teach their young clients to comply with the exigencies of a traditional work ethos of reliability and industriousness: "get up every morning and be there on time". The adequacy of such an intent to generalise this sort of ethos to the least qualified among today's young unemployed people may be put into doubt seriously and with relevant arguments under the contemporary conditions of persisting structural unemployment' This notwithstanding, these virtues are undoubtedly of high pragmatical importance for potential labour market insertion of this group. On a more practical level of daily project work, the issue is also present. Not too surprisingly, according to our observations, the more motivated the staff, and the more time they dispose of to deal with the different youth under their tutelage, the lesser the temptation to resort to the simplifying strategy of recourse to authority or to imparting discipline.

By way of summary of the issue, one could say that while the Bauhof is far from indifferent towards the kinds of orientations that clients develop *and* on the practical level there is a clear limit of tolerance for certain types of behaviour, the degrees to which "desirable" behaviour and orientations are actively fostered varies within the projects and between the different members of the staff. The project overall is unmistakably following an orientation towards labour market insertion and is consequently not specifically equipped for dealing with youth who require a less targeted and more open approach to finding their way under the circumstances of present-day German society.

3.3 Violence, Drugs, and Procedures of Exclusion

Though behavioural rules within a project tend to be more tolerant than the regulations of the "outside world" of society at large or at the workplace, there are some aspects which are handled more rigorously within the Bauhof than outside. There is a distinct "zero tolerance" -policy towards alcohol and other drugs (consumption or dealing) and to-wards violence. Compliance with these rules is not a matter to be taken for granted, as it is not at all uncommon for young people involved in Bauhof projects to have frequent contact with drugs or to be involved in individual or gang violence outside. Therefore, these simple but for many a young per-son "unorthodox" rules draw a clear dividing line between the outside world and the project premises and also symbolically mark the frontier to a realm, where other rules are invigorated than those that many participants have learnt to live by. If an individual breaks one of these rules, she or he gets one warning and risks expulsion the next time. Though very seldom so far, expulsions from projects on these grounds have taken place.

3.4 Co-operation with other Institutions

Increasingly, co-operation with other institutions is seen as a crucial aspect for the success of the work done at the Bauhof. The scope and type of co-operation varies highly, according to the characteristics of the projects and the staff, who's personal contacts are most important for establishing co-operation and maintaining it. Generally speaking, the institution maintains co-operative links to all kinds of entities that who's work interacts with the work of Bauhof or who share interests with it. Other non-profit organisations, for example, are important as providers of "realistic jobs" that the work-oriented Bauhof educational projects can carry out. The most intense co-operative relations are with institutions that individuals in the Bauhof projects may be involved with: youth administration, homelessness shelters, drug counselling agencies, certain branches of the police and the court, the employment agency etc. On the level of individual cases, co-operation is intended with all other parties interested in or concerned with a particular case, i.e. on top of the already mentioned institutions the family, the school and eventually case-workers in the first place. In the S.T.E.P. project e.g., the project workers convoke a reunion of all those parties with the intention to co-ordinate their work and to define tasks and responsibilities. Thereafter, an individual

case-specific "support-plan" is elaborated together with the young person affected. The main goal of this plan is to establish verifiable short and medium-range tasks and goals that both the individual concerned and the social-worker in charge agree upon. Progress on this support plan is monitored every two months, in a reunion where problems are also discussed, successes acknowledged and the next steps to be taken established i.e. in this approach, the most important co-operating agent is seen in the interested individual herself.

On the level of international partnership, the Bauhof maintains co-operative relations to partners in other countries, currently the Czech Republic, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe. Co-operation with the Czech Republic for example regularly includes visits of Bauhof groups (clients and staff) to this country, where they assist the partner project in the execution of certain manual tasks, like renovation of buildings and the like.

4. Future Prospects and Possible Developments

4.1 Of the institution

As described above, the Bauhof has experienced considerable growth in the few years of its existence. It is upon the further development of this dynamic of growth and di-versification that, in our opinion, the future shape of the Bauhof will largely depend and that strategic decisions have to confront.

With continued growth the likelihood is of:

- a shift from the currently predominant 'autocratic' principles of management, based on personal relations of authority and trust towards more formal, procedural rules.
- the decentralisation of management and more autonomy for each project ('centrifugal dynamic').
- less integration between the projects and stronger professionalisation within them, at the risk of loosing the 'holistic' aspiration that has inspired the Bauhof since its foundation.

The alternative scenario of a reverse tendency seems less likely. It would imply less project diversity and a concentration on core activities, with continuous funding of few 'nucleus' projects with their corresponding staff and the emergence of a classical

'hierarchy' between those and occasional additional projects with supplementary staff.

The more probable growth-hypothesis allows for various variants e.g. further professionalisation and specialisation could include 'outplacing' parts of the Bauhof institution or the independisation of part projects that would specialise in a specific task and could maintain privileged relations with certain funding institutions - and maintain close co-operation with the Bauhof where suitable. In part, the fact that there is currently no project like the 'Open Work-shop' any more at the Bauhof, but such a project is run by a closely co-operating institution who gets joint funding with a Bauhof project that is constructed as interlacing module to it, could also be read as a step towards a specialisation. Once a situation is reached, where different partial projects of the Bauhof would maintain closer relations to other projects and institutions outside the Bauhof than to the neighbouring projects within, the Bauhof as an umbrella institution would, in our opinion and due to its success, be quite a different project than in its initial phase and could move on to other tasks that single projects can not deal with with sufficient energy and professional dedication. The currently growing public awareness of the problem of youth unemployment, of lacking qualifications and closely related issues as youth violence and xenophobia, seem to ensure that the need for institutions like the Bauhof is all but diminishing.

4.2 Of the work

For the Bauhof staff, a farther differentiation into 'core personnel', with longer-term or unlimited contracts and supplementary personnel, employed for the duration of a project is the most probable development. Concomitantly, a tendency towards 'normalisation' of the structure of the staff in the sense of a growing proportion of staff trained and qualified for social work and other specialised duties will follow in all probability. While currently there could seem to be a tendency to move away from the more straining and difficult cases of street kids and youth with severe problems or high conflict potential, this could, in our opinion, respond primarily to situational imperatives of project construction. With (public) funding available for a difficult clientele and with ongoing professionalisation of the Bauhof, this 'trend' may well be reversed.

5. The 'Bauhof' as 'Flagship' - an Evaluation

An evaluation always responds to the evaluators specific preferences and criteria which could well be different for other observers. Ours have to be seen in the light of the research frame of SOSTRIS. In accordance with our approach and results, we have paid special attention to questions like the following:

does the agency proceed with biographical sensitivity?

are they using and encouraging activating strategies?

how well is the agency adapted to local needs and circumstances?

is the agency innovative?

how self-reflexive and flexible is the agency?

A **case-centred approach** is predominant in the Bauhof projects. Individual case histories are drawn and an individual 'support plan' is elaborated and periodically updated. However, attention to biographical issues like the origin and current dynamics of case-specific orientations and behaviour could still be improved and could in our opinion contribute to design adequate individual support plans.

Young people in the Bauhof find a considerable amount of incentives to participate in a variety of activities, **according to their needs and possibilities** - apart from the project work in a strict sense. We have found particularly intriguing e.g. the effects of Karate-courses, which confront participants with an entirely new set of rules and the values of self-restriction and convey the unusual experience to act (or desist from acting) from a position of strength. The entire philosophy of the institution is geared towards focusing these young people on participating actively in society via labour market insertion. This provides the Bauhof with a clear profile but also restricts its abilities to attend to the needs of young people that are not primarily due to lacking employment or qualification, though this may be part of their problematic situation.

The Bauhof follows an integrative approach of co-operation with manifold institutions and neighbouring projects, and other interested parties on the level of individual cases. This is but one manifestation of the Bauhof strong-point, which is its highly successful local **immersion**. It is drawing on, as well as mobilising, local resources, with respect to manpower and co-operating institutions. Most, if not all of

the staff come from the immediate region, many of them have formerly been unemployed and have got a new chance at Bauhof, training on the job and/or getting formal qualifications outside. Thus the history of the Bauhof as a project runs parallel to the individual histories of many *of* the staff who share the task of managing their individual biographical transitions from GDR to unified Germany and whose perspectives are linked to the future of their joint endeavour, the Bauhof. This local immersion is further strengthened by its intent to link up with local historical tradition (A. H. Francke).

The local embedding of the Bauhof endeavour may also account for the highly successful fund-raising. The approach to financing is rather traditional (vs. newer more market-oriented strategies, e.g. of co-operation with local SMEs etc.) but very successful. A broad range of institutions and entities have contributed to the Bauhof who also employs strategies of 'targeted approaches' to private sponsors for specific purposes. All the financing efforts seem to indicate an effort towards growing economical self-sufficiency.

From an outside perspective, no single element of the Bauhof seems exceptionally innovative *per se*, rather they may respond to normal standards of good practice. However, if we change the reference to eastern Germany, the former GDR territory, the **innovative aspects** become more visible. The Bauhof is an example of very successful institution building, of the creation of an agency, where not only similar agencies have not existed before, but the problem itself that the agency tries to deal with, unemployment, - and accordingly all knowledge and expertise in treating the problem - was unknown or non-existent until the unification of Germany and the subsequent transformations of the economic and social structures. This point might also make clear, that few aspects of the Bauhof experience are transferable as such, in our opinion, as it is intimately linked to the local and historical context. The observation itself, that evaluation of the transferability of experiences and structures, has to take into account the local and historical context, is of course transferable.

Conclusion - The Achievements of the Bauhof

What the Bauhof has achieved so far can, in our view, be summarised as 'building bridges' of various kinds:

biographical bridges between the GDR and unified Germany
employment bridges for ex-GDR staff

bridges into the future - community and labour market integration - for the young clients through the fostering of personal stability and professional qualifications.

The main characteristic of the project in its current state is, that it seems to have positive effects on everybody involved¹⁰, promoting all their different interests whereby "work" - as shared value and shared experience - is of central importance.

Notes

1. See the German National Report on Category IV, in: Sostris Working paper 6: Case Study Material on Unqualified Youth, London: BISP (forthcoming).
2. The Bauhof has been initiated and intimately linked to the Protestant church. However, currently, a closer connection to other sponsors is discussed, instead of a continuation of the exclusive and strong bond with the church.
3. More on the selection process farther down in section 3.1.
4. Such a project is however offered by another institution in a different area of town, with which Bauhof co-operates.
5. The other projects are, as is generally the case for employment promotion measures and similar publicly financed measures, not allowed to offer their products and services on the market in order to avoid "unfair competition". Therefore, they are mostly working for other non-profit organisations, or supplying goods and services for public institutions that those would not buy otherwise.
6. The educational tradition of this institution reaches back to the early period of enlightenment in the 17th century and its main figure: the Protestant pedagogue 'August Herman Francke'. He was the founder and manager of this exceptional and nearly self-sufficient ensemble of schools, workshops and houses mainly for orphans.
7. 'Could you please tell us the story of the project, and how you became involved' (Interview Heyroth, p. I.).
8. 'For male youth, enlistment in the army has to be seen as an alternative to educational projects. Serving in the army is compulsory in Germany, i.e. it is hardly avoidable. Enlisting for more than the compulsory term on the other hand offers not only an interesting financial retribution but . also the possibility of schooling and formation.
9. ' For references and more detail on this issue see our National Report on Unqualified Youth, in: Sostris Working paper 6: Case Study Material on Unqualified Youth, London: BISP (forthcoming).

10. There may exist certain dangers for some of the younger staff, whose involvement is largely due to personal links, and for whom staying at the Bauhof much longer might not be in their best interest. Also, it is evident that the head of the project is risking 'bum-out'.