



# Erasmus+

## **Studies and professional education - Are these the only opportunities?**

Projektarbeit des „Erasmus+“ Projektkurs  
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# Motivation

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Create and develop your future – that is our topic and something that every student has to deal with at the end of their school career.

Most students answer the question “What are you going to do after school?” very surely and easily with “I’m going to study” or “I will do an apprenticeship”. But what if one doesn’t know what fits perfectly to his or hers personality, abilities and wishes? Are studies and professional education the only opportunities after school?

And if they aren’t, what are the other opportunities?

In the following I will answer those questions. Because of the variety of different opportunities for students worldwide, I will focus on the opportunities that are given German students and describe those only as short profiles. Otherwise this project exam would exceed the given page limit. Also I will evaluate a survey that I created in regards to this project exam.

I’m personally one of those students, who aren’t sure about their future after school. I don’t know what exactly I should study or what exactly is the perfect job for me, that is why I was inspired to write this project exam. On this way I can expand my horizons and maybe find the perfect opportunity for myself.

# 1. What are the opportunities? - A short profile

Are studies and professional education the only opportunities after school? To answer that question: No, there are a few other opportunities for students, not only studies and professional education. To receive a broader view I divided those opportunities into three categories, which can overlap. That means one cannot say that the opportunities of the first category only apply to that, but they apply mostly to that category they were divided in.

## 1.1 Vocational preparations

**Vocational preparations**, are opportunities, which prepare the person, who is performing those for a profession or a professional field.

### *a. Apprenticeship*

During an apprenticeship the trainee is intended to acquire skills, knowledge and competences that are necessary for a recognised occupation. The benefit of an apprenticeship is the practical orientation that the trainee gains at a company. In Germany there are more than 300 different recognised occupations. Therein one can difference between apprenticeships in public service, school based and dual apprenticeships, which can also be performed part-time. Furthermore an apprenticeship can be performed abroad and a special training for high school graduates is given. At the end of an apprenticeship the trainee has to solve an oral / practical and a written examination. The duration and remuneration depends on the kind of apprenticeship and the professional field.



### Dual apprenticeship:

- Is performed equally in a company as at a vocational school.
- In general this kind of apprenticeship takes two to three and a half years and the remuneration is located between 290€ and 1,050€ in the first year of training.
- The professional fields, which are using this kind of apprenticeships are manufacturing industry, trade, craft and agriculture.

# 1. What are the opportunities? - A short profile

## 1.1 Vocational preparations

### *a. Apprenticeship*

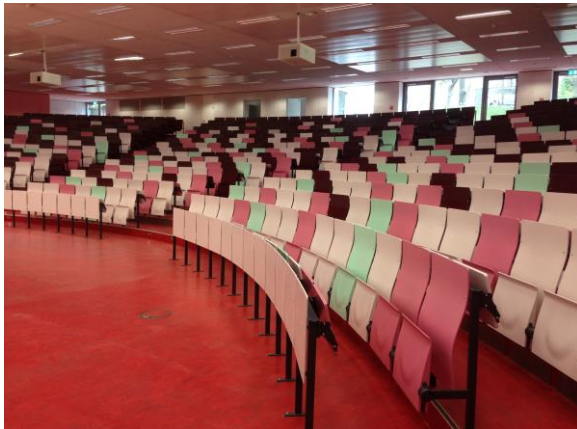
#### School based apprenticeship:

- Is performed mostly at a vocational school. To gain practical orientation the trainees have to complete one or more internships.
- In general this kind of apprenticeship takes one to four years and normally a remuneration is not given, there are only a few exceptions.
- The professional fields, which are using this kind of apprenticeships are healthcare, pedagogy, social service and design.

#### Apprenticeship in public service:

- As the dual apprenticeship this kind of apprenticeship is performed equally at a vocational school and a public facility.

### *b. Studies*



During studies the student gains knowledge of a certain field, which is chosen by the student in form of one or more subjects and is acquired by courses, seminars, lectures and internships. The obtaining is testes in form of examinations. One can difference between studying at a

college and studying at a university. Studying at college gives more practical orientation and courses, seminars and lectures take place in small groups. In contrast students at university have more freedom in choosing their subjects. Moreover students can also perform their studies abroad or in part-time. For students, who cannot decide between different subjects the “Studium generale” or Summer Session is the perfect way to orientate. Further high school students can take part of “sample studies”, in which they experience the everyday life at college or university. Normally only (compartment) matriculates are allowed to study, but after completing an apprenticeships, trainees can educate at college.

# 1. What are the opportunities? - A short profile

## 1.1 Vocational preparations

### *b. Studies*

#### “Studium Generale”:

- “Studium generale” or translated “general studies”, is an opportunity to orientate at college or university. In a duration of a few months students get to choose different subjects from different professional fields and get to know life at college.
- This kind of orientation is not available at all colleges or universities and it is very pricey.

#### Summer sessions:

- Similar to the “Studium generale”, summer sessions help students to orientate. In a few months the students test different subjects, but those have to be in one professional field.

### *c. Dual studies*

During dual studies the student studies at a college or university, while working in a company or running an apprenticeship, so it connects practice with studying. As a consequence the trainee and student also acquires



knowledge, skills and competences for the chosen profession. The remuneration depends on the college, university and company the student is studying, respectively working at. One can differ four kinds of dual Studies:

#### “Apprenticeship integrated studies”:

- While studying at a college or university the student is performing an apprenticeship at a company.
- At the end the trainee/student gets two degrees, a bachelor degree and an education level.

# 1. What are the opportunities? - A short profile

## 1.1 Vocational preparations

### *c. Dual studies*

#### “Practice integrated studies”:

- While studying at a college or university the student is working at a company as an intern, temporary employee or volunteer.
- At the end the student only gets one degree, a bachelor degree.

#### “Profession integrated studies”:

- While studying at a college or university the student is an employee in a company, thereby the times the student is at college or university are written down in the employment contract.
- A precondition for this kind of dual studies is a completed education level. At the end the student receives a bachelor degree.

#### “Profession accompanying studies”:

- While working in full-time employment, the employee is studying at college or university, this occurs after work, in the evening.
- At the end the employee / student receives a bachelor degree.

### *d. Internship*

In an internship the intern collects practical experiences and gets a view on the profession of the internship and the company, which is offering this. But not only does one get professional experience, an internship is a good opportunity to orientate as well and prepares the intern for the world of work. Furthermore for some subjects at university or college an internship is assuming. One can also perform an internship abroad. The duration of an internship and the thereof depending remuneration will be wrapped up with the company. In Germany an internship has to be remunerated, if it lasts longer than three months and is voluntary.



# 1. What are the opportunities? - A short profile

## 1.1 Vocational preparation

### *e. Vocational preparation programme*

There are also many opportunities for students, who can't find an apprenticeship or other opportunities after school, to get prepared for work life or help to find an apprenticeship. For example: Preparation year for an apprenticeship (AVJ), Vocational initiative (BvB), Entrance qualification (EQ), Vocational entrance year (BEJ), Vocational orientation year (BOJ) or Vocational preparation year (BVJ)

## 1.2 Gap year: Orientation and self-establishment

The second category is **gap year: orientation and self-establishment**, in which are mostly opportunities that give one time to think, to orientate and to get to know who one wants to be. As the title says these opportunities intend to be so called "gap years", also known as sabbatical years.

### *a. Voluntary work*

As a volunteer one engages and helps at an institution, which can be ecological, social, cultural or non-profit. Therein the volunteer takes part in seminars, which are intend to teach knowledge one needs



to know for their voluntary work and give the opportunity to exchange experiences with other volunteers. Mostly one volunteers six to twelve months and a remuneration is not given, but there is an allowance every volunteer gets in exchange for their

voluntary work (maximum 350€). One can also perform their voluntary work abroad.

# 1. What are the opportunities? - A short profile

## 1.2 Gap-year: orientation and self-establishment

### *a. Voluntary work*

There are many different voluntary programs, for example:

- Voluntary social year (also in sports, culture, politics and as ecological year)
- Federal Voluntary Service
- European Voluntary Service
- Worldwide opportunities on organic farms (WWOOF)
- International voluntary service for young people (IJFD)
- Voluntary projects ( “Kulturweit”, European solidarity cooperation, “Weltwärts”)

There is also an opportunity given to volunteer for the military service, but this kind of voluntary service vary compared to the others.

### *b. Traveling*



One opportunity after school is traveling, it helps to orientate and grow, but also is a chance to distract from studying and working. But traveling does not mean one is on vacation the whole time, there are also some programs one can choose from and that help to get prepared for the

future. Many of this programs teach so called “soft skills” that are very important for future jobs, but also for life in general. One can difference between language travel, work and travel and au-pair / demi-pair. Also there are many other opportunities that can be performed abroad, that means, while traveling.

#### Language travel:

While traveling one learns a new language or improves a language one already learned. Additionally the traveller gets to know the culture of another country.

# 1. What are the opportunities? - A short profile

## 1.2 Gap-year: orientation and self-establishment

### *c. Traveling*

#### Work and travel:

While traveling and exploring a country, one is working in different part-time jobs to finance their journey. That gives also the opportunity to get some work experience.

#### Au-Pair / Demi-Pair:

As au-pair the traveller is living with a foreign family and has the job to take care of their children. In exchange the au-pair gets an allowance and in their free time one can explore the country. A demi-pair is an au-pair and language travel combined.

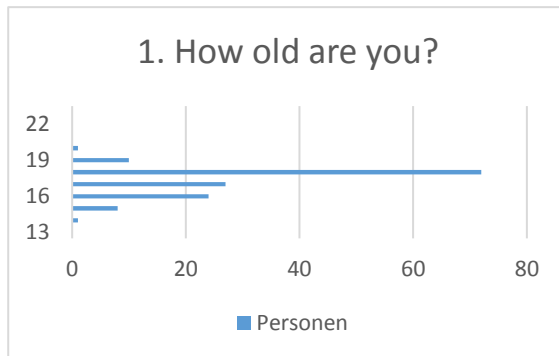
## 1.3 Working

If preparing for a profession or traveling is not the right opportunity for one, or one wants to make money as fast as they can, **working** could be the right opportunity. In a part-time job one can also earn money for their studies or one can open up an independent business, to fulfil their dreams.

## 2. Survey

Regards this project exam I started a survey, in which I asked students about their knowledge of different opportunities and their opinion on the vocational guidance at their school.

In Total 154 students from different schools in the area of Mönchengladbach answered my questions, but only 143 answers were to take serious.



### 2.1 How old are you?

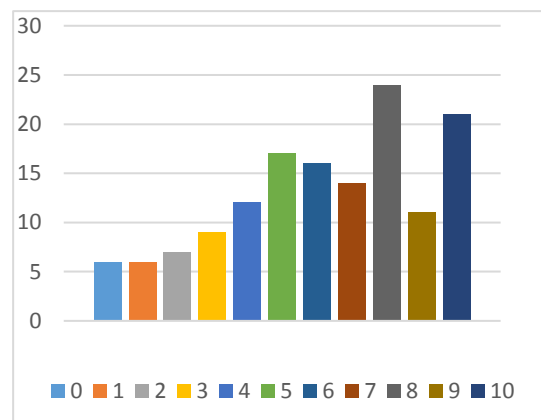
My first question was "How old are you", to get to know which age group was answering my questions.

Conspicuous thereby was the age group of 18 year olds. 50% of students, who answered my survey

stated they were 18. In contrast only 27 of 143 students stated they were 17 and 24 indicated they were 16. 7%, in total 10 students were 19, 8 said they were at the age of 15, one stated he/she is 20 and one stated that he/she is 14 years old. On average the students were 17.36 years old.

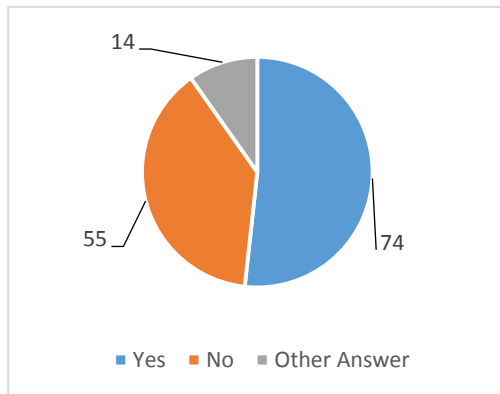
### 2.2 "How sure are you about your future career choice? Do you know what you want to do?"

My second question intended to get to know how sure students nowadays are about their future and career choice. On average the students were neutral about their career choice. The most students stated they were sure to very sure about their future career planes (56 Students). 19 Students indicated they were unsure about what to choose for their future career.



## 2. Survey

### 2.3 “Do you think the vocational guidance at your school does a good job?”

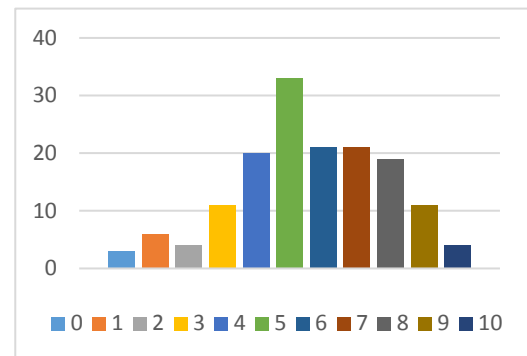


To get an opinion on the vocational guidance that is given at school I created question three. More than 50% of the questioned students think their vocational guidance does a good job. Circa 10% gave other answers than yes or no. They stated that their vocational guidance is too unilaterally and that the given guidance

isn't enough. Almost 40% is sure, that their vocational guidance does a bad job.

### 2.4 “How often is guidance given at your school?”

With the same intention as in question three I created question four. The most students stated that there is a fair amount of guidance at their school given. Only 6 students think the guidance at their school is never given.



### 2.5 “What opportunities do you know?”

In this question I tested, what opportunities the students had immediately on their mind. 129 students thought of studies, 119 of an apprenticeship and 97 of voluntary work. Only 48 students named dual studies as an opportunity after school, followed by 44 students, who named going abroad as an opportunity. Opportunities like working or internships were only named by each 7 students. The vocational preparation program was named by only one person.

## 2. Survey

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### 2.6 “Do you know the following opportunities?”

Compared to question five, I ask here, if the student knew the named opportunities. 100% of students knew studies and dual studies. Almost everyone knew the voluntary program “voluntary social year”, also almost everyone knew the opportunity to work as an au-pair. In contrast only 7 persons knew the voluntary program “European solidarity cooperation” and only 18 knew the opportunity of “summer sessions”.

### 2.7 “If you had to choose now, what would you do after school?”

As last the question, I wanted to know, what the students would choose, if they had to choose directly. 66 of 143 students stated, they would choose to study, 33 would do an apprenticeship and 22 would try dual studies. Only each one would choose to orientate or to do a language travel. 15 Students would like to go abroad and 12 would engage at a voluntary program.

In conclusion one can say, that the questioned students, are mostly very sure about their future career choice. Most of them want to study after school and have a strict plan. Only a few students, aren't sure about what they should do after school. The vocational guidance could be a reason for that, but it don't has to be, because 50% of the students answered that their vocational guidance seems to be good. Otherwise 10% thinks there is not enough of it and 40% are sure that the vocational guidance is not good enough. Over all the students know many of the questioned opportunities and it seems that they're ready to create and develop their future.

# Source Index

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1. 25.05.2019, 18.54Uhr, <https://context.reverso.net/%C3%BCbersetzung/deutsch-englisch/>
2. 25.05.2019, 18.56Uhr, <https://www.n-tv.de/ratgeber/Drei-Optionen-fuer-ein-Orientierungsjahr-article19806309.html>
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16. Ausgabe 2019/20, Redaktion Elena Weber, Unicum Abi Zukunftsweiser Ausgabe
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19. 06.06.2019, 17.24Uhr, <https://www.surveymonkey.de/>



# Image Index

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Bild 1: 21.05.2019, 11.15Uhr [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Erasmus%2B\\_Logo.svg](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Erasmus%2B_Logo.svg)



Bild 2: 21.05.2019, 11.20Uhr, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mearbeitgeber/6214299904>



Bild 3: 21.05.2019, 11.22Uhr, <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Universit%C3%A4t-Frankfurt-Bei-Tag.jpg>

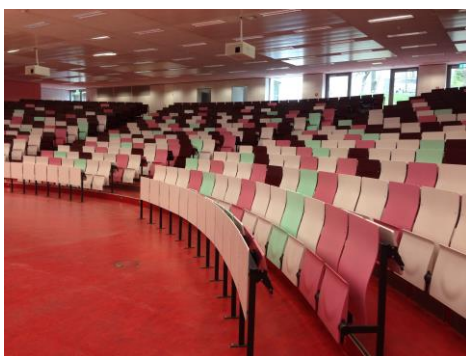


Bild 4: 21.05.2019, 11.25Uhr,  
[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:GER\\_Wuppertal\\_Universit%C3%A4t\\_021\\_2016\\_-\\_H%C3%B6rsaal\\_33.jpg](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:GER_Wuppertal_Universit%C3%A4t_021_2016_-_H%C3%B6rsaal_33.jpg)



## Image Index

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Bild 5: 21.05.2019, 11.28Uhr, <https://pxhere.com/en/photo/644755>



Bild 6: 21.05.2019, 11.32Uhr, <https://pixnio.com/de/menschen/frauen/gruppe-frauen-freiwillige-zu-helfen-bepflanzen-sumpf-gras-zuflucht>

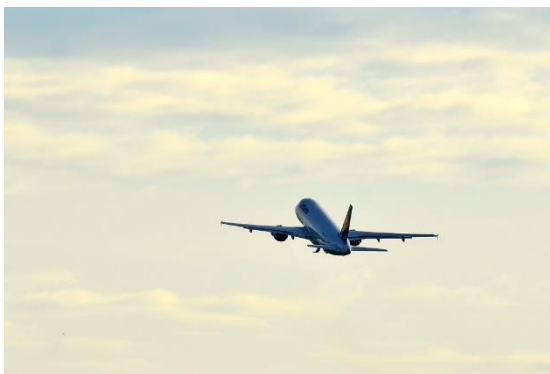


Bild 7: 21.05.2019, 11.35Uhr, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dirkvorderstrasse/10583840103>

# Eigenständigkeitserklärung

Hiermit bestätige ich, dass ich die Arbeit zum 07. Juni 2019 mit dem Thema „Studies and professional education - Are these the only opportunities?“ selbstständig verfasst und keine anderen als die angegebenen Hilfsmittel benutzt habe. Die Stellen der Arbeit, die mit dem Wortlaut oder dem Sinn nach anderen Werken (dazu gehören auch Internetquellen) entnommen sind, wurden unter Angabe der Quelle kenntlich gemacht.

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Ort, Datum

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Unterschrift

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