



EUSBSR
EU STRATEGY
FOR THE BALTIC
SEA REGION



Common challenges and opportunities

macro-regional strategies offer strategic frameworks for example to tackle challenges related to vulnerable groups of youth



Norden Association Sweden

A civil society organisation founded in 1919 with the aim to promote and develop cooperation between the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)

Since 1965 on the state budget under the Ministry for Foreign affairs (40% of the yearly turn over)

Two assignments connected to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)

1. **Policy Area Coordinator for Policy Area Education, Science and Social affairs** together with Hamburg. Assigned by the eight EU member states in the macro-region and the EU Commission (DG Regio), since 2013
2. Assigned by the Swedish Government to **support the Swedish Prime Ministers office with the implementation of EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Sweden**, since 2021



Macro-regional strategies address complex societal challenges where not a single country, nor a region or municipality can tackle it on its own.

Macro-regional strategies bring stakeholders together, cross-sectorial, multilevel and transnational to co-create solutions to these challenges.

Macro-regional strategies offers collaborative platforms in a mission-oriented way for long term cooperation not depending on project funding.





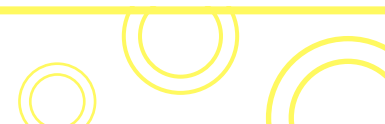
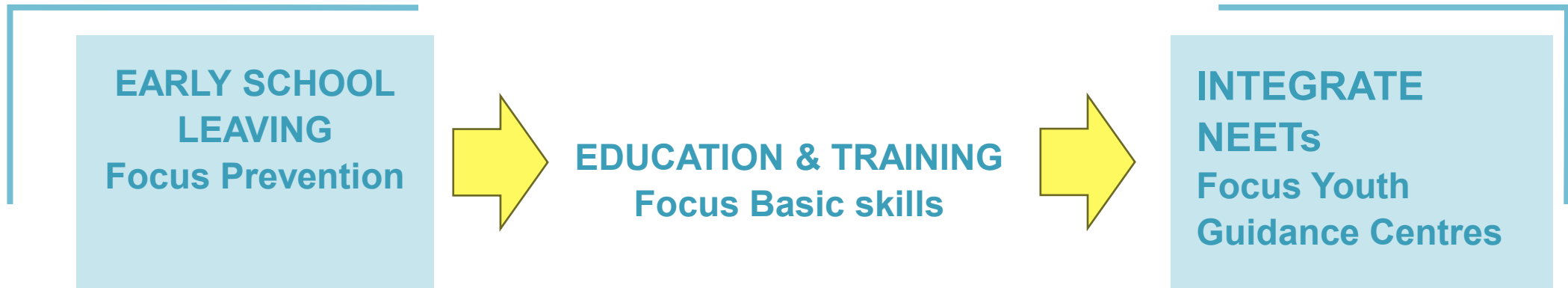
SCHOOL TO WORK

A collaborative platform within the Baltic Sea Strategy

with the aim to smoothen the transition for youth from school to work by providing a transnational platform brining stakeholders together for sharing experiences and joint innovation of measures.

[More information](#)





What do we know about young people in NEET situations?

– young people without a job, nor in education or training

This is a diverse group of young people with many different backgrounds. These are some of them:

Being in a NEET situation is often a result of early school leaving or long periods of absence from school. However, it is not always because of weak performance in school. It can also be the opposite. A child doing well in school but under stimulated.

Children coming from families with migrant backgrounds are overrepresented in the group of NEETs.

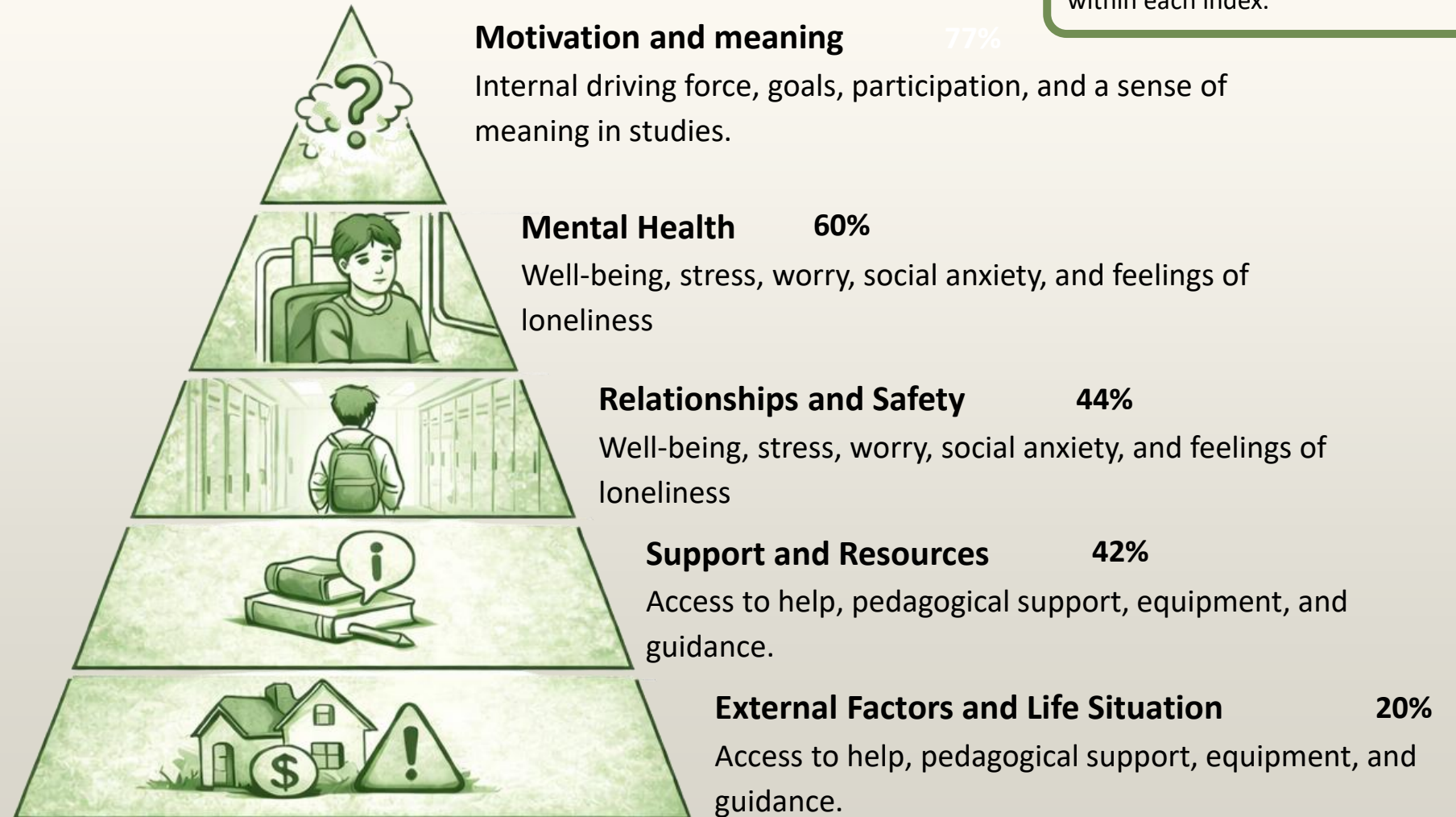
In some countries these young people are also involved in criminality starting already at low ages, as low as 10 years in some cases in Sweden.

Another common feature is loneliness, no friends, no good relations to parents, often contacts are just on Internet. Living in a parallel society a gaming one is common for NEETs



Risk Hierarchy

Risk scores (%) represent the average level of risk across the survey items within each index.



How do we reach NEETs, how do we motivate them to seek help, and then how do we support their individual path to a life with job, friends etc.

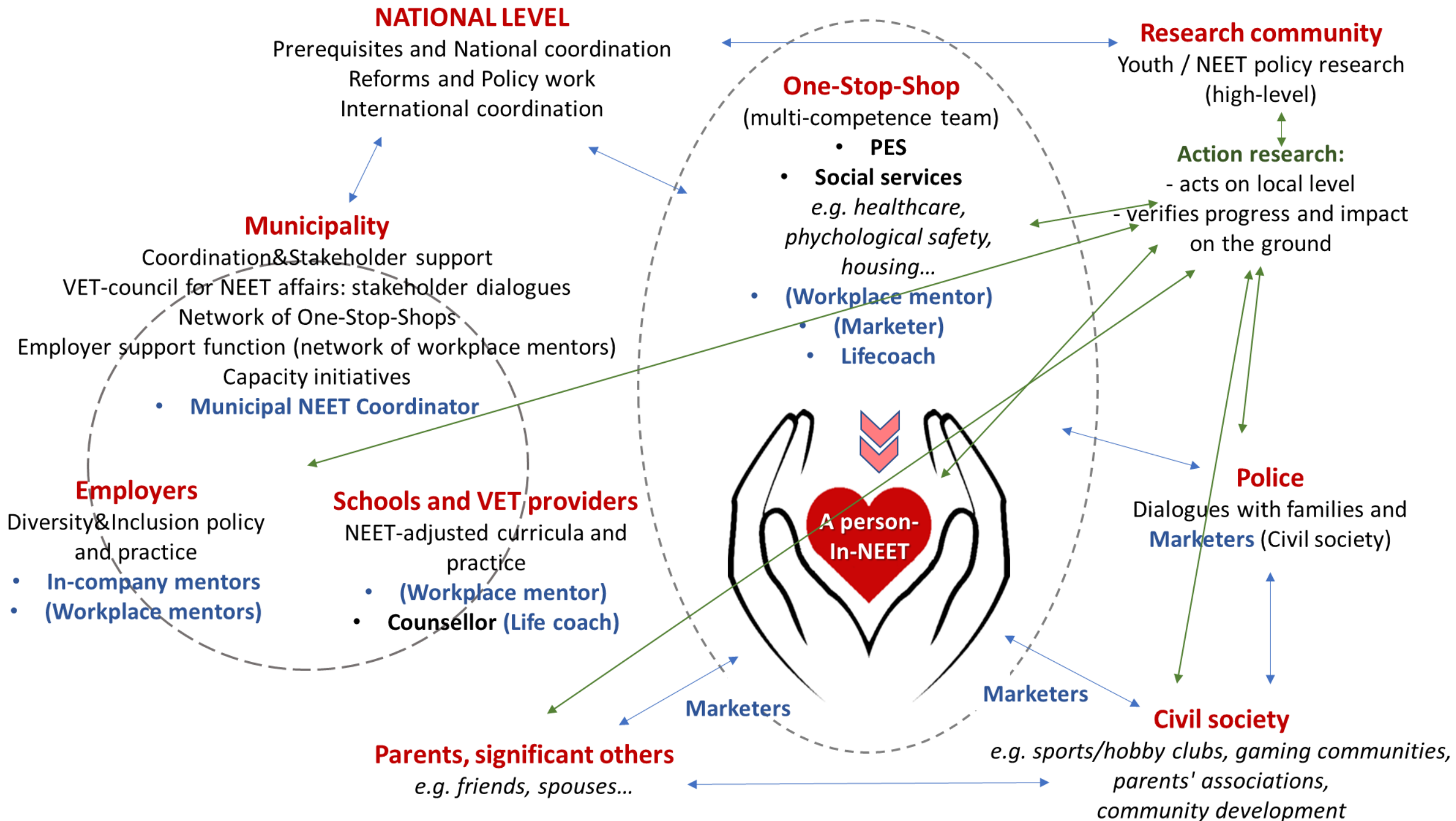
In the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region the group of NEETs is a long-term priority that has stayed with the strategy since 2011.

There has been several initiatives over the years, including mappings of good practices and co-creation of measures. In 2020 recommendations were presented in a Baltic Sea Region NEET Agenda

What became obvious for us when preparing this Agenda was the success with integrated NEET services, Youth Guidance Centres with multi-competence teams.

There are several good examples of such centres in the macro-region. The best ones in Finland (Ohjaamos) and in Germany (Jugendberufsagentur). Based on them we modelled an ideal Youth Guidance Centre.







Jenna Westerlund

Outreach youth work



- You can come and chat with the outreach youth workers over a cup of coffee, for instance. You can talk about anything that puzzles you.
- Services are voluntary and confidential.
- Services are for 15-28-year-old youth and young adults.
- Contact outreach youth workers if:
 - your plans for the future are unclear
 - you do not have a job or a study place
 - you are lonely and want something to do
 - filling official forms feels difficult
 - you just want to chat or you would like to get support in a life situation that feels difficult



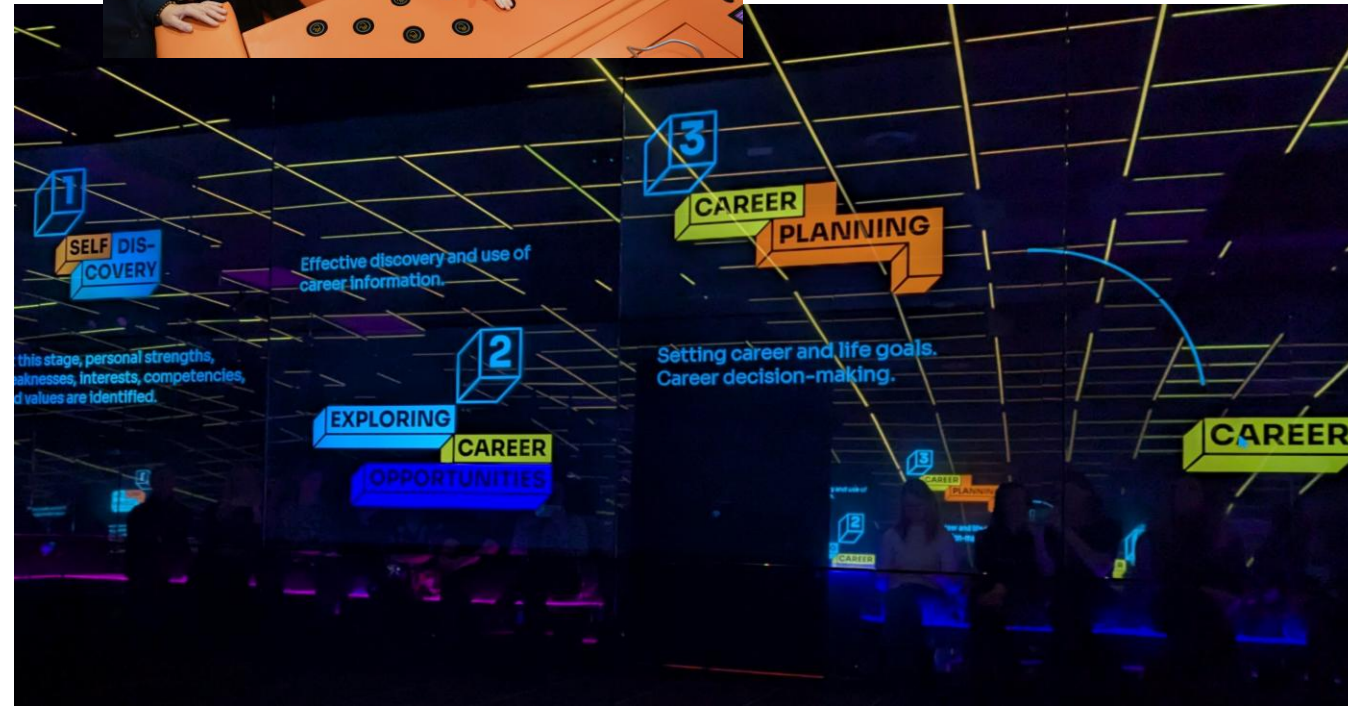


- **19** regional career centers.
- **Career counselling** and **vocational exploration visits**.
- **Target group:** Individuals from 14 years old.
- **Focus:** non-qualified youth, NEETs, and 50+.

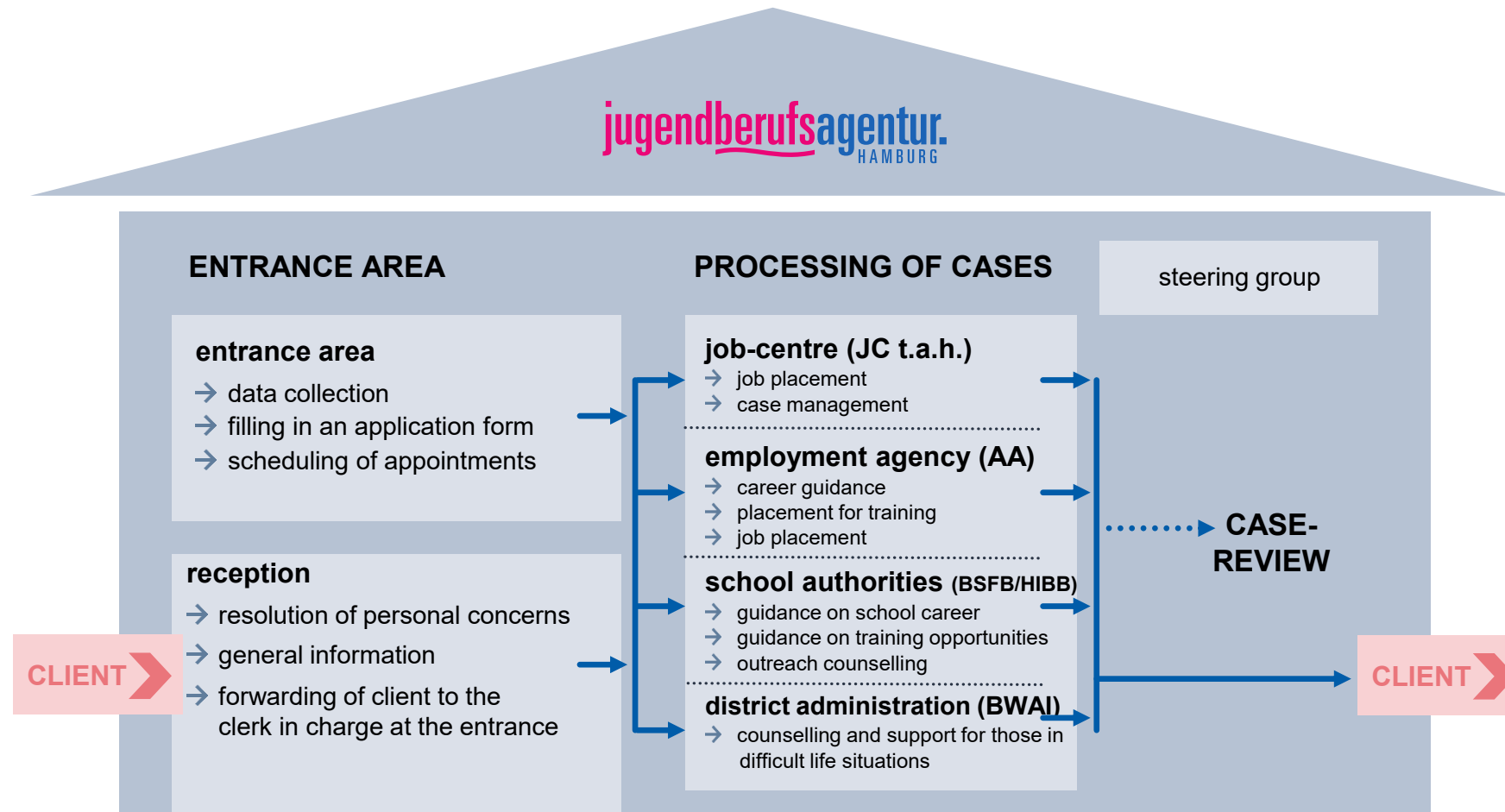


INTERACTIVE SPACE

- Skill testing stations,
- Job interview simulator,
- Interactive self-discovery assessments.



Hamburg Youth Employment Agency: same structure in 7 regional centres






Why does Youth Guidance Centres prove to work for the NEET group?

Awake curiosity, get to know yourself, your strengths and weaknesses and learn to make best use of them. Starting to make plans.

Offer a possibility to sense **belongingness**, become member of a group and get friends.

Low threshold services tailor-made for the group of NEETs. One trusted contact person guiding you to the services you need.

One organisation, where the outreach work and the mentoring at workplaces are integrated with the multi-competence team at the centres.



What's on the agenda for 2026?

In Poland

The concept of counselling points for young people (Youth Guidance Centres) was tested in 76 local labour offices in 2023-2024.

In 2025 a bill on the Labour Market and Employment Services introduces possibility for labour offices and voluntary labour corps to create counselling points for young people (Youth Guidance Centres) from 1 January 2026 - providing information and counselling on employment and forms of support offered by Public Employment services, the possibility of using social assistance services, health care, further education, legal advice, housing issues.

In the Baltic Sea Region as a whole

A network of Youth Guidance Centres has been established offering study visits, joint capacity building workshops and a yearly conference

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Thank you for your attention!