

Ofinally, could assist by offering a temporary financial „start“-aid for hiring additional personnel.

#### **2.4. Active Labour Market Policy**

For the medium-term future the Advisory Council advocates the following strategic objectives in labour market policy:

Central tasks must be the intensification of the placement of employees and the expansion of the direct company contacts. Apart from measures of further training, active instruments might be hiring allowances, temporary job creation programmes, child care facilities etc. New models combining social training (e.g. in form of an employment institution) and further vocational training could be developed for long-term unemployed. The field of non-profit manpower-leasing must, however, as a „secondary labour market“ remain a transitory labour market only.

„Arbeitsstiftungen“ (labour foundations) have proven particularly useful instruments of placement and further training. The relations between Labour Market Service and employees must follow a contractual relationship. Instruction and training of the key skills should be increasingly incorporated into the repertory of labour market training. Moreover, measures of further vocational training of unemployed persons should be evaluated more strongly and examined for qualitative criteria as well as for chances of re-employment and cost efficiency. To make the employment market and the range of further vocational training measures more transparent, cooperation between the Labour Market Service, enterprises and existing institutions of further training should be intensified.

In addition, the relationship between active (labour market subsidies) and passive (safeguarding the existence) means needs to be changed. This asks for clear political priorities, since a change in this relationship in the short run is not a zero-sum game but requires additional expenditure which should be compensated through successful placements in the medium and longer term. An intensification of active labour market policy must furthermore be accompanied by a comprehensive „quality assurance“ of the measures to be financed.

To fully utilize the possibilities of active labour market policy to contribute to decreasing unemployment, it must become even more efficient in the coming years. The newly acquired independence of the Labour Market Service offers the prerequisite to optimally use the means needed for infrastructure and personnel in line with the targets set by the Labour Market Service; here decentralization is of particular importance.