

## Best Practice Competition

<b>Title</b>	Best Practice Competition
<b>Coverage</b>	Germany and Austria
<b>Organization/enterprise</b>	The Deichmann company group is Europe's biggest shoe seller and is represented in 14 countries. In Germany, Deichmann has about 1,000 shops and employs more than 13,000 people.
<b>Topic</b>	Advocacy
<b>Target group and outreach</b>	Disadvantaged youth such as early school leavers, young people with disabilities and other youth that find it difficult to enter the labour market because of different vulnerabilities
<b>Purpose</b>	Since 2005 Deichmann has been holding a yearly competition for employers and companies that have been especially active in creating jobs for young people. The award is given to private companies (mostly SMEs) and public organizations that have been especially committed to helping youth with disabilities. The main goal is to provide incentives to companies combating rising youth unemployment.
<b>Key features</b>	(1) Promotional initiative in the form of awards  (2) Targets enterprises that have created jobs, especially for young people with disabilities
<b>Strategy and approach</b>	In 2005 more than 200 mostly small and medium enterprises applied for 80,000 euros worth of prize money, the winners getting 10,000 euros each. The applicants must have given disadvantaged youth in the last 12 months a viable opportunity to enter the labour market. The choice of the winner depends mostly on creativity and uniqueness of the approach of the enterprise and less on the number of integrated youth. In 2005 a small cabinet-maker workshop and a fan shop won against 200 other applicants.  A second competition in 2006 was equally successful. A small art coffee shop offering training to 5 teenagers with disabilities and an ambulant nursing service, which offers training to early school leavers (especially young mothers), won the first prize.
<b>Partners</b>	The Deichmann company group funds all activities. The competition is widely supported by high ranking German politicians, such as the former President of Germany, Roman Herzog. In 2007 Christina Rau, wife of the former President of Germany, Johannes Rau, will participate in the competition proceedings.
<b>Major achievements</b>	According to Deichmann, combating youth unemployment is one of the greatest challenges in society today and one which should be addressed through encouragement of entrepreneurial and political initiatives. Deichmann increased its apprenticeship placements in 2006 from 585 to 750, which brings the total number of apprentices employed by Deichmann in Germany to 1,700.
<b>Additional information</b>	

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Source: Deichmann