



**Interview with Nikolai Dürhammer (Managing Director, StepStone Austria)
on the occasion of the Recruiting Excellence Congress on 17th November 2022 in
Vienna**

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IC: Mr Dürhammer, Universum, a member of the StepStone Group, published its annual Employer Branding Now 2022 study in July. It predicts that the upheaval in the talent market will have a fundamental impact on the labour market. Which upheavals will be the most incisive?

The labour market will change fundamentally in the coming years and decades. We are already in an applicant market - it is no longer the companies alone that dictate the conditions. The needs of employees are increasingly gaining weight. Why is that? The labour force is shrinking. Now you could say, never mind, digitalisation and automation will solve the problem, but I think that's an old wives' tale. We need people in the labour market. The EB-Now study by Universum confirms that companies' HR departments are already realising that the employer brand has become more important - in Austria, 91% of HR experts are convinced that it will be difficult to attract the workers they need if they are not perceived as an attractive employer.

IC: In your opinion, what is the reason why data-based decision-making in recruiting has not yet arrived at Austrian companies - according to the study, only about 20% are currently using it - and how quickly can optimisation be expected here?

It has simply not been necessary to address the needs of the target groups in many sectors and occupational fields. There were labour and skills shortages in individual areas, but by and large supply and demand were balanced. That is no longer the case. Meanwhile, the supply on the job market is very large. But demand has not increased accordingly, because there are not suddenly more people in work - on the contrary, they are becoming fewer. So it is becoming increasingly important for companies to address all target groups in the labour market - young people, of course, a popular target group; but also everyone else. Companies today can no longer afford to exclude older workers, for example, because that will be a very large group in the years to come. It is important to understand what people need in order to respond as an employer.

IC: Great resignation and job boom - two buzzwords that appear in the title of your lecture "The flood is coming ..." at the Recruiting Excellence Congress. What do companies have to do today and in the future to reach, convince and retain young talent?

We continuously collect all commercial job advertisements that are placed in Austria on all relevant job portals and in the media, and this boom is clearly visible here: For two years, the number of advertisements has been increasing, the duration of the advertisements has been increasing, the number of multiple advertisements has been increasing, and the number of people willing to change jobs has been increasing, which also means fluctuation. The wave of change is beginning to roll - but if you look at the demographic development in Austria, as already mentioned, but also in Europe as a whole and in the largest industrialised nations worldwide, you realise that this is only a breeze compared to what companies will have to prepare for in the future. Essentially, the levers are: an upgrade to work and an upgrade to recruiting. That means more attractive jobs, more flexible forms of employment, recruiting more people from abroad, creating a healthy and conducive work environment, systematically retraining skills and generally faster, more agile recruiting.

IC: Unemployment was recently at its lowest level in 14 years. WIFO and IHS nevertheless expect a stable unemployment rate in 2023 despite the forecast of stagflation. How do you assess calls for stronger employment incentives to raise the existing potential on the Austrian labour market and their potential for success?

Here the state is called upon to rethink its incentive system. Especially for those on lower incomes, the combination of unemployment benefits and marginal employment is a disincentive to return to full employment. Geographical mobility must also increase. 15% of the unemployed could immediately find a job in a shortage occupation if they were willing to move to another federal state to do so.

IC: What input can the participants of the Recruiting Excellence Congress on 17th November particularly look forward to in your presentation...?

What strategies are available to us to counteract the worsening labour shortage? What can I do as a company to optimally address all relevant target groups on the labour market and to be successful in the search for talent? There will certainly be one or two eye-openers!



MMag. Nikolai Dürhammer is StepStone Austria Managing Director has 15 years of management and leadership experience in the media, finance and HR industry.

The graduate in law and business administration is a labour market expert and managing director of StepStone Austria, the e-recruiting company that connects people with the world of work. In addition to online job platforms, other digital services such as employer branding services, salary analyses and video recruiting solutions are part of the company's offering.

StepStone GmbH, a subsidiary of Axel Springer SE, is active in more than 20 countries and employs more than 3,500 people. Nikolai is a regular speaker on all topics relating to the job market, employer branding and recruiting. With well-founded insights and a strategic view of the future, Nikolai creates awareness for the most important topics and trends that move our labour market.