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- R: Document, report (excluding the periodic and final reports)
- DEM: Demonstrator, pilot, prototype, plan designs
- DEC: Websites, patents filing, press & media actions, videos, etc.
- OTHER: Software, technical diagram, etc.

³ **Dissemination level:** Use one of the following codes (in consistence with the Description of the Action)

- PU: Public, fully open, e.g. web
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Handbook on Promising Integrative Practices

MIMY Public Deliverable 9.5





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Introduction

About the MIMY project

Starting from February 2020, the EU-funded project MIMY (Empowerment through Liquid Integration of Migrant Youth in vulnerable conditions) is a research project exploring the integration processes of young migrants (aged 18-29) in vulnerable conditions in Europe. The MIMY project involved 12 academic partners with teams partially composed of young migrants as peer researchers and 2 non-academic partners within 9 European countries.

MIMY aims to better understand liquid integration processes of young migrants in vulnerable conditions, supporting their empowerment and fostering effective and inclusive integration strategies within Europe. To reach these goals MIMY introduces, inter alia, practices that can better support the empowerment of young migrants in vulnerable conditions to become active citizens within an inclusive society.

About the handbook on promising practices for migrant youth integration

This handbook is a collection of promising integrative practices collected by MIMY academic partners in their nine respective European countries (Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sweden, United Kingdom (England)). MIMY academic partners were asked* to select and describe projects and initiatives that they - as local experts in their respective countries - identified as enlightening and promising for the integration of young migrants in vulnerable conditions.

When drafting this handbook and to be in line with MIMY's objectives, a specific definition of promising practice of migrant youth integration in vulnerable conditions has been developed. MIMY partners consequently only documented projects which:

- demonstrate a positive impact on young migrants;
- empower them in their host society to become active citizens from an individual perspective;
- help overcome social and economic injustice;
- support diversity from an institutional perspective; or
- help to improve the quality of integration policies for young migrants (young adults and late adolescents).

This handbook offers the reader an overview of several projects and initiatives across the MIMY countries with different characteristics (i.e. implementation, duration, funding, actors involved, replication potential, activities conducted) but sharing the same overall goal: to foster the integration process of young migrants in vulnerable conditions.

*With the exemption of projects and initiatives taking place in Luxembourg, which were directly documented by practitioners.



It is noticeable that not only the impact and results of the activities developed during such projects allow them to be regarded as promising practices but also projects per se. This is especially true i.e. for migrant-led projects and initiatives, whose empowering dimension already appear through the direct involvement of migrants within the management team.

As a consultation tool for practitioners and policymakers, this handbook facilitates knowledge-sharing across Europe: it raises awareness of past and existing projects and initiatives, therefore serving as a possible base for replication. As a result, it can be of use to inspire and build more comprehensive strategies for integration across and beyond the EU.

Organization of this handbook

The projects and initiatives listed in this handbook are sorted by their main field of action into 5 categories: formal and non-formal education, labour market integration, social contact & mental/physical well-being (i.e. through arts, sports, etc.), awareness-raising & advocacy, housing.

Within the MIMY project, the liquid integration processes of young migrants in vulnerable conditions have proved to be multifaceted and affected by many parameters. These processes can therefore be supported across diverse fields of action reflected in the categories mentioned above. For clarity issues, projects belonging to two or more categories are only presented once within the category they impact most. The practices followed by * show limits which prevent us from regarding them as promising. However, we still believe that we can learn from them and therefore, document them here.

For each project selected, a summary, main facts & figures, information about constraints faced, results, lessons learned, and replication potential are provided when available.

An outlook summing up the main lessons learned and resulting conclusions is found at the end of the handbook. Policy recommendations for a better socio-economic integration are also included.

Limits of this handbook

Due to the multiplicity of actors involved in the selection and documentation of projects, the diversity of respective countries' realities and the heterogenous data available, some information and details about the projects listed may be partial.

The implications of the Covid19 pandemic on projects documented here are also not systematically discussed. This is because some projects documented here were completed before spring 2020, while others started during relatively low waves of the pandemic (during which sanitary measures were significantly reduced).

Formal & non-formal Education

Educational Learning Support Hub

From 2015 onwards, the Educational Learning Support Hub has been providing a safe and stimulating support hub and learning environment for Barnsley's diverse communities. Led by volunteers, it aims to bring all communities together in Barnsley through the English language, with a foundation of life-long learning for socially marginalized adults. ELSH serves some of the most socially excluded communities in Barnsley, including those within the wider population who face discrimination and stigma. It supports their skills development and well-being. ELSH not only provides community-based education services, but also supports longer term integration pathways for people with migration experiences. The hub gives access to valuable resources for the local refugee and migrant community, thus helping securing not only settlement in the UK where required, but also housing and advice on how to find employment or further education.



Projects beneficiaries are young parents, young adults not actively engaged in education, employment or training, asylum seekers, refugees and migrants older than 18 years old



Charitable



United Kingdom, Barnsley



Project largely run by volunteers, co-founded the Barnsley Migration Partnership and collaborates with civil society and local government

Summary

ELSH has developed an educational programme for pre-entry to Level 3 ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) free of charge by teaching, through committed volunteers. ELSH coordinates and delivers the teaching of basic skills through ESOL, Maths, Literacy and ICT to refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and local young people. ELSH offers work experience, placements and training alongside their lessons in English, Mathematics and IT, which helps students to gain employment or further study when they leave ELSH. ELSH also organises social and recreational activities and events involving the local community, for example intercultural festivals and an annual programme for Black History Month. ELSH puts mental health high on their agenda in order to support its clients who are suffering from stress, physical exhaustion and anxiety. This is supported through a structured mental health and wellbeing programme and early referrals. As a community-based education provider ELSH is often engaging with young people who are newly arrived in Barnsley. Drop-in support is provided to all service users. They can access support and advocacy on a range of issues to address their holistic needs. Partnership work enables access to specialist services. By participating in multi-agency forums, ELSH is also working to address inequality in the wider service provision context.

ELSH's goal is to make a positive difference to the lives of people by supporting them to learn, play, become creative, control something by themselves, and communicate effectively and positively so as to help build confidence and the ability to contribute to society.

Stakeholders & policymakers involved

ELSH is one of four organisations (with Migrant Action, Feels Like Home, and The Polish Library) in Barnsley that has in 2022, under the banner of the Barnsley Migration Partnership, set up a Multi-Agency drop in to support migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in accessing support services. The Migration Partnership is resourced by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, and it offers a migrant-led infrastructure for the sustainable engagement and meaningful participation of migrant communities in mainstream activity. The weekly multi-agency hub specifically acts as a catalyst for change by improving access to services (including to ELSH's own services), ensuring effective integration and stronger communities. Alongside connecting ELSH learners into the Multi-Agency Hub, ELSH also acts as a single 'Point of Contact' for help, advice and referral. They are able to refer learners to local assistance and specialist help such as: The local food bank scheme; The Citizens Advice Bureau; Legal advice to refugees to assist in their applications for settlement in the UK; Housing – through Barnsley Council and local housing authorities; Help with referrals to the local network of interpreters to help with appointments for medical help and children's schooling.

Gender dimension

Education provision is within mixed gender groups. To address barriers to young parents engaging in the services, they are targeted directly through outreach with organisations that provide family support.



Objectives

- to provide a positive, safe and stimulating environment for Young Parents, Young People Not Engaged In Education, Employment Or Training, Asylum Seekers, Refugees And Migrants
- for these groups to enjoy their learning, achieve their potential, and to successfully integrate
- for learners to become independent and part of the local community
- to promote social inclusion among people who face isolation and exclusion on the basis of their social and economic position
- to provide educational support, functional skills and drop-in support that helps people to develop new skills and confidence

Management & operation

ELSH is largely supported by volunteer teachers and support workers, who work with the Director of the organisation to ensure that ELSH is able to deliver organisational objectives. Volunteers, staff and support workers have longstanding experience within the local Barnsley community, and represent people with migration experience and the wider local population. This is important in terms of creating a space of welcome, inclusion and belonging, for the diverse students that participate in the ELSH learning environment. The organisation has charitable status and the Director is supported by a Board of Trustees who are local to Barnsley and South Yorkshire, have lived experience of migration, and expertise in English language learning and teaching.

Monitoring, evaluation & validation

Monitoring of student participation is an important indicator of the impact of ELSH's work. However, the organisation is often not able to meet the demand from learners who have high ambitions for their English language learning. To capture the impact of their most recent innovation in service provision around mental health and wellbeing, ELSH has secured seed funding from the University of Sheffield Building Stronger Communities programme to develop a feasibility study for an impact evaluation framework. This is an important area of knowledge production, as evidencing the impact of community-based education that combines mental health and wellbeing support would provide important insights for others in the region, and the country, in developing appropriate education provision for diverse communities with experiences of trauma, violence, exclusion and isolation.

Results & impact

ELSH provides a safe and supportive learning environment for vulnerable young people who have moved to Barnsley from other countries, and who are local to the area. This supports young people to grow confident, build their self-esteem and take steps into wider service provision and community-building. ELSH is often the first point of contact with a service for many young people seeking asylum in Barnsley.

ELSH's work aims to provide a complementary space for learners who struggle to engage in the formal educational setting. By taking an approach to teaching and learning that is grounded in an ethic of care, understanding and shared lived experience, ELSH provides an opportunity for engagement that can act as a catalyst for longer term, more structured education pathways.

The pandemic made more visible and heightened the mental and physical health issues ELSH's service users experienced, many became more isolated and experienced adverse mental and physical health impacts. ELSH developed a mental health programme which provided a low threshold wellbeing programme sensitive to the needs of minoritised communities, combined with established referral pathways to mainstream services. In September 2021, ELSH started a Health and Wellbeing Nutrition course in collaboration with Reds in the Community (charitable arm of Barnsley Town Football Club) in support of the health and well-being of their volunteers, students and local community. Connecting community-based education to opportunities for intercultural learning, between migrant communities and with the wider local population connects the process of education to the process of community-building in a place. It recognises that learning pathways are facilitated by a wider sense of inclusion, belonging, including linguistic and cultural acceptance.

Lessons learned

The impact of ELSH's work is supported by the fact that it operates in an environment where people can meet others faced with similar challenges and who are looking to integrate successfully into the local community. There are no lengthy assessment periods so that ELSH can provide the support required quickly for those in need. Young people can start their educational pathway and English language learning without delay, which is a counter to the 6 month waiting period (post-asylum claim) for government provided ESOL classes, or periods of waiting due to summer and winter holiday closures.

Constraints

Securing longer-term funding for community-based education provision is a challenge for a small organisation like ELSH. Being a largely volunteer-led service, it can be challenging to find the skills, capacity and time for funding proposals to be developed, and won. This constrains the amount of provision possible, but also the opportunity to resource more permanent staff that can grow the organisational infrastructure, for example to support in-depth monitoring and evaluation activity, which in turn constrains fundraising. Gaining charitable status was an important milestone in ELSH's development, which ensured a Board of Trustees were put in place to provide guidance to the direction of the work. Importantly these trustees have understanding of the local context, lived experience of migration, and significant expertise in community-based and adult-education provision.



Replicability

The work of a community-based service like ELSH is deeply connected to the vision of the migration-experienced community in Barnsley, and it has grown from a set of local aspirations for a more inclusive, equal and stronger community for all residents of Barnsley. It is important to recognise the commitment, passion and motivation within the leadership and volunteers within community-based education provision such as this. Although it is desirable to extend this practice more widely, it is a practice that is specific to the reality that communities are navigating, and the knowledge held by the people leading the work of socially transformative education.

This has involved putting young adults' futures at the centre of the service provision, and committing to walking alongside them to thrive in spite of the structural inequalities they face in light of immigration policies that isolate and marginalise. The need to provide free, timely provision to young asylum seekers and refugees is a response to the gaps in this provision in the wider context, and more recently the adaptation to mental health and wellbeing support speaks directly to a context of uncertain and insecure futures created by a hostile immigration context. The development of this sort of grassroots education provision needs start from the desires, aspirations and needs of young migrants themselves. This insight can then provide the knowledge needed to engage young people in longer-term pathways and futures, making these possible when they may otherwise seem impossible.

Policy impact

ELSH has had impact in establishing the Barnsley Migration Partnership, funded by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, which is a significant milestone in the migrant support sector having recognition for the impact of their work at grassroots in the lives of Barnsley's marginalised communities, primarily refugees, asylum-seekers and people with migration experience. The significance of working with those closest to the lives of affected communities, to engage them in the services available across the wider public and third sector in Barnsley has been critical in providing an enabling environment for migrant integration within the borough. Young migrants integration into mainstream and universal services, in a way that starts with those services working to understand how they can better reach and support migrant communities is an important shift towards 'whole society' integration.

More information at

www.elshub.org.uk

Contact person

Florentine Booth-King



The work of a community-based service like ELSH is deeply connected to the vision of the migration-experienced community in Barnsley, and it has grown from a set of local aspirations for a more inclusive, equal and stronger community for all residents of Barnsley.



Discover case studies & testimonies from ELSH's users here



Österlen folk high school

Österlen's folk high school is a place for adult education also offering accommodation for students on site. Swedish language classes for immigrants, introductory programmes for newly arrived migrants are offered as well as adult education for those who need to complete their high school studies. In addition to that, numerous classes and courses in arts, music and international development take place. Students' gender, backgrounds and ages are various (but a majority of young adults attends the school). The Österlen's folk high school aims at creating "constructive meetings, integration and a living learning environment for all".



Projects beneficiaries are high school drop outs, newly arrived migrants, adults who want to study arts, music, international development etc.



Sweden,
Tomelilla, Österlen, Skåne region



State-funded



Project run by Österlen Folkhögskola in collaboration with different actors across the region. The school is an important hub for the civil society sector in Österlen

Objectives

- to offer a wide range of courses/activities
- to create rewarding meetings, integration and a living learning environment for everyone
- to be identified as a resource in the region
- to play an active role in the local and regional development

(retrieved from the organization's website)

Management & Operation

Österlen folk high school is run as a non-governmental organization without any political or religious affiliation. Courses are offered on site and students can stay in the dormitories, which provide a social setting that enables these different groups of students to meet. A continuous monitoring of the folk high schools is assured by the Swedish state.

Results & impact

Österlen folk high school is a school that continuously changes and brings in new students. The school has an international profile with far-reaching integration in focus. It wishes to "contribute actively to increased understanding and interaction between people with different backgrounds through collaboration with other societal actors and through various internationally emphasized courses. In collaboration with business, municipalities and non-profit organizations, the folk high school will play a great role for cultures to meet and come together in everyday life in a natural way".

(retrieved from the organization's website)

Lessons learned

The folk high schools are unique places that gather people from all backgrounds. It is an inspiring place that enables intergroup contact and convivial everyday experiences.

Replicability

The folk high school system is an old system that is relatively particular in a Scandinavian context with strong funding from and connection to the state. Other countries could be inspired to set up similar systems although the strength lies in the long history of "folkbildning", which is a form of accessible education with the focus on peer-to-peer learning.

More information at

<https://www.osterlen.fhsk.se/>
[The folk high schools - Folkbildningsrådet \(folkbildningsradet.se\)](https://www.folkbildningsradet.se/)



It is an inspiring place that enables intergroup contact and convivial everyday experiences.



Learn more about
Österlen folk high
school's activities here

Train of Hope Dortmund e.V.

Train of Hope Dortmund e.V. is a non-profit organization whose activities revolve around refugees' empowerment. It offers a wide range of activities, from language classes, administrative help to leisure activities (arts, culture, sport). Train of Hope Dortmund e.V. finds its roots in a (volunteer) civil society movement that took place at Dortmund's central station as soon as September 2015, when an unprecedented amount of refugees arrived to the city.



Project's beneficiaries are mainly refugees; other migrants are welcome too



Germany, Dortmund



Donation-based and project based



Train of Hope e.V. was first an informal practice solely relying on volunteers, later officially registered as an NGO

Summary

The current association was a civil society reaction to the arrival of refugees in September 2015 to Dortmund. The media covered the news that trains full of refugees were about to be transported to the main train station of Dortmund, to be distributed to other locations afterwards. The local population then self-organised at the train station to assist these arrivals, before any city officials did. The aid these volunteers were providing lasted multiple weeks, and then they were given a facility to operate, i.e. store the aid, and it became more professional. Dortmund was a "refugee hub", where distribution to other locations took place, where the need for an organized reception was high. The volunteers decided to form an official NGO after experiencing positive reaction, thus seeing the continuous need for integration assistance to those who just arrived.

Since 2015, Train of Hope has been growing and is currently among the most-known refugee organisations in Dortmund. The NGO developed specific working themes (Art & Culture & Sport; Gender & LGBTI; Child & Youth; Political Education & International; further Education & Recognition) and working groups in order to meet the diverse needs of its beneficiaries (Queers of Hope, Cooking for Homeless, Café of Hope-Language café, Music of Hope, Girls of Hope, Men of Hope etc.).

Objectives

- to promote understanding, tolerance between cultures
- to provide help to refugees and displaced persons
- to offer children, adolescents and young people artistic and cultural activities as well as sports
- to support education, to provide (vocational) training and student aid
- to promote development cooperation & to strengthen civic engagement
- to promote peaceful coexistence in which everyone, regardless of origin, skin color, religion, sexuality & religion, can realize their own potential & help shape society

Management & Operation

A board of management (3 members) operates as decision making bodies. The NGO employs one manager per specific working theme.

Results & Impact

Most of the members and employees of the NGO are refugees themselves, who first arrived in Dortmund in 2015. Such inclusion and integration practices are considered to be the NGO's biggest impact (and the NGO won various awards due to their empowerment focus).

Lessons learned

Education is a basic building block of integration, which is why this topic is this NGO's focus. Each person is therefore individually supported in his/her life planning and accompanied in the respective processes. Cooperations are created with education providers and workshops, seminars and competence assessments are carried out.

Constraints

Covid19 was among the biggest problems faced by the NGO. As an outcome of the pandemic, it became harder to engage with young refugees in different activities.

Replicability

The projects developed by the NGO are mostly short-term and bounded to third party funding. A long-term financial engagement would allow the NGO to extend its activity more widely.

Policy impact

Some of the managers and the board members are at the same time active as policymakers in the city of Dortmund. This political involvement gives them useful perspectives from both sides: practice and policy making.

Contact person

Fatma Karacakurtoglu

More information here



Labour market Integration

AZF3 - Arbeitsmarktzugang für Flüchtlinge (Labour Market Access for Refugees)

Between January 2016 and September 2022, the AZF3 project provided asylum seekers and refugees support and counselling in order to facilitate their integration on the labour market, through skills assessment, assistance during the application process, referral to local networks providing support for access to the labour market, etc. Thanks to its cooperation with local employment agencies and job centres, AZF3 supported placement in professional programmes, in job-related language support (ESF-BAMF language courses), in further education and qualification programmes. Employees of job centers, employment agencies and other multipliers were trained and information on issues of labour market access for refugees was shared.



Projects beneficiaries are refugees in Lower Saxony, including in particular those with temporary residence/settlement permit; permission to stay during asylum procedure; certificate of registration as asylum seeker; proof of arrival; tolerated status



Germany, Lower Saxony, city & region of Hanover, Braunschweig, Wolfsburg, districts of Nienburg, Schaumburg, Hameln-Pyrmont, Holzminden, Hildesheim, Peine, Wolfenbüttel, Salzgitter, Helmstedt and Gifhorn



European Social Fund (federal ESF integration directive), priority area "Integration of asylum seekers & refugees" (IvaF); Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs



AZF3 is a network composed of:

- Flüchtlingsrat [Refugee Council for] Niedersachsen e.V.;
- Bildungsvereinigung [Educational Association] ARBEIT UND LEBEN Nds. Mitte gGmbH;
- Bildungsvereinigung [Educational Association] ARBEIT UND LEBEN Nds. Ost gGmbH;
- Handwerkskammer [Chamber of Crafts, Project and Service Company] Hannover Projekt- und Servicegesellschaft mbH;
- kargah e.V. – Verein für interkulturelle Kommunikation, Migrations- und Flüchtlingsarbeit [Association for intercultural communication, migration and refugee work]

- to help with questions and problems related to work permits and labour market access

(Source: <https://azf3.de>)

Stakeholders & policy makers involved

The projects involved various actors in integration work. Firstly, refugees are directly approached through personal counselling by the project staff. Secondly, counsellors and employees of employment agencies and job centres are trained and advised on questions of residence status and employment. Furthermore, there was an exchange with the staff of the regular services in individual cases. Thirdly, volunteers and employers had the opportunity to receive counselling within the framework of the AZF 3 project. (Source: <https://bit.ly/3fTYjFw>)

In addition, training courses for volunteers, full-time counsellors and staff of job centres and employment agencies were held at various locations in Lower Saxony, as well as an annual general conference for project staff of the IvaF projects.

Objectives

- to support and offer counselling for asylum seekers and refugees in their search for vocational training and jobs
- to help clarify career prospects
- to improve employment opportunities
- to open up prospects of staying through labour market perspectives

Management & Operation

AZF3 was supported by five partners who divided the responsibility for different regions in Lower Saxony within the project area among themselves and provided advice in consultation hours at the local level. The regions in Lower Saxony were divided among the providers so that there were fixed contact persons for the people on a local level.

Results & impact

About 2500 participants (mostly young refugees) have received counselling so far during the project period. The number of short counselling sessions of less than 4 hours is much higher.

Monitoring, evaluation & validation

There was no evaluation specific to the AZF3's project. A more general study (2020) conducted by the Institut für Sozialforschung und Gesellschaftspolitik GmbH (ISG)



along with the Institut für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik e.V (ISS) concluded that the projects of the area of action Integration of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (IvAF) achieved proven positive effects in:

- increasing employability
- (sustainable) integration into employment, vocational training and education
- the structural improvement of access to the labour market
- a contribution to reducing poverty is difficult to prove due to the lack of data (cf. Mettke 2020: 58ff.)
- a contribution to social inclusion is difficult to prove but can be assumed due to the holistic approach

The project activities also included dealing with problems in the areas of housing, authorities and health care (cf. Mettke 2020: 66). Overall, it is worth noting that in the IvAF projects "the integration rates into employment are high compared to other ESF funding programmes" (Mettke 2020: 66, translated from German).

Lessons learned

Here we can refer to the recommendations for action of the topic-centred study (Mettke 2020). In the IvAF projects, both older refugees and women are disproportionately under-reached (cf. *ibid.* 66). This leads to the conclusion that these target groups must be addressed in a special way. In the surveys of the evaluation study, it was pointed out that one solution would be to specifically seek out the women in places where they are anyway (such as schools, daycare centres) as well as to organise low threshold offers and cooperation with migrant self-organisations (cf. *ibid.*). "In order to better reach women with refugee experience, it is recommended to develop and implement strategies that specifically address women. The family situation should also be taken into account." (Mettke 2020: 66).

The AZF3 project takes this into account by providing women with particularly low-threshold counselling via messenger groups and in their first language. "Since the pandemic, our WhatsApp group for refugee women has been particularly successful in providing individual counselling. In the meantime, around 100 women receive low-threshold information and questions answered there in Arabic and Farsi/Dari." (Schießl/Weber 2021: 8f., translated from German) In the meantime, the number of members in the WhatsApp group has increased significantly.

Language and qualification courses should correspond to the circumstances of the target group (with regard to family situation and the intention to earn money rather quickly) and accordingly be possible on a part-time basis (cf. *ibid.* 67).

Training in residence law should be combined with training in intercultural competences (cf. *ibid.*).

Constraints

In some regions, specialised language courses for special target groups (particularly disadvantaged sub-target groups, such as refugees with little education or poor prospects of staying or courses with childcare) are not available to a

sufficient extent and the funding of these courses is not guaranteed in principle. In some IvAF projects, this challenge was met by increasing the involvement of local education providers (such as the adult education centre) in the project. Another proposed solution is to provide subject-specific German language training through the chambers of commerce in the form of cross-company language courses (Mettke 2020: 66f.).

The group of refugees with disabilities or special vulnerabilities still receives far too little attention. There is often a lack of appropriate offers and access to special counselling and support services. Another obstacle mentioned was the time limit of the guidance, since even after placement in vocational training there is a need for further support for the participants and counselling for employers so that labour market integration succeeds in the long term (*ibid.*).

Policy impact

In its *Annual Report 2020*, the Flüchtlingsrat presents the following activities at the political level: cooperation in a nationwide working group of IvAF networks; position paper on the need for action on legal regulations regarding labour market access and promotion as well as on the regulations on the right to stay and residence perspectives for tolerated persons for the Bundestag elections by employees of various IvAF networks (Schießl/Weber 2021: 9). Even in times of the pandemic, it was possible to maintain or further expand the services in the participating regions. "Especially in the district of Holzminden, the Flüchtlingsrat has become a very decisive actor in supporting refugees and is in good exchange with the authorities there." (Schießl/Weber 2021: 9, translated from German)

References

- Schießl, S.; Weber, K. (2021). Tätigkeitsbericht des Vorstandes des Flüchtlingsrats Niedersachsen e.V. für das Jahr 2020. Download from <https://bit.ly/3EnUFNg>.
- Mettke, E. (2020). Themenzentrierte Studie "Wirkung von Maßnahmen auf Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund". Einzelstudien im Rahmen der ESF-Dachevaluation. In Zusammenarbeit mit ISS und ISG. Im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit und Soziales. Download from <https://bit.ly/3Uvrv4v>

More information at

<https://azf3.de/>

<https://bit.ly/3EB1nQc> (not directly related to the AZF 3 project, but to similar projects in the IvAF programme)

Read the full evaluation report on IvAF projects in Germany here



DimiCome

From 2019 to 2022, the DimiCome (Diversity Management and Integration - competences of migrants on the labour market) project promoted migrants' economic integration by valuing their competences and by fostering their positive impact on the competitiveness of companies. Among others, research activities as well as awareness-raising and training activities took place, targeting economic actors or organizations operating in the field of migrant's integration and in the governance of the labour market.



Project beneficiaries are asylum seekers & refugees (all genders)



Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (European Commission)



Italy, regions of Emilia Romagna, Lombardy, Piedmont, Apulia, Veneto



Project run by the ISMU foundation in cooperation with local stakeholders, institutional partners and academics in 5 European countries

Summary

In addition to supporting the employability of migrants in the short term, the project intends to contribute to the renewal of the Italian model of integration, making it more coherent with long-term sustainability needs, through:

- an inclusive transformation of labour market organizations, towards a greater propensity to recruit migrant workers on the basis of their specific skills and to strategically promote the expression of the diversity of human resources;
- the strengthening, among actors engaged in labour market governance, of the capacity to recognize and enhance the potential of migrants, in terms of competences and in particular of soft skills linked to the migratory experience.

The project activities entail research and exchange of good practices for the definition of guidelines (for the awareness-raising/training of different stakeholders on business strategies for the valorization of immigrants), discussion tables & workshops (for the identification of strengths/weaknesses of methodologies for the identification and assessment of migrants' soft skills) and dissemination of project results and outputs.

Stakeholders & policymakers involved

The Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture (Unioncamere) helped the municipality of Milan to establish a centre for training and work (where migrants' skills are identified and evaluated). Associazione Francesco Realmonte Onlus, Centro Estero per l'Internazionalizzazione Scpa (Ceipiemonte), Fondazione Casa di Carità Arti e Mestieri Onlus, Fondazione Mondinsieme, Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro, Università degli Studi di Verona carried out the experimentation aimed at identifying and assessing the soft skills of migrants and organised awareness-raising meetings for the project. Some of them, together with Sietar Italia, as Italian associated partners, also carried out in-company training on the perception and presence of diversity management.

Objectives

- to elaborate guidelines on how to value migrant human resources in labour market organizations
- to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the existing methods for bringing to light and assessing migrants' soft skills
- to disseminate the project outcomes through national and international awareness-raising seminars, a final conference and a project webpage

Management & Operation

As lead partner, the ISMU Foundation is responsible for the overall project's management and coordination. Along with the foreign partners involved, various activities were carried, from good practices training (and production of a booklet on these) to experimentation of good practices with beneficiaries (and production of guidelines for migrants' soft skills assessment). A mapping of good practices of enterprises combining competitiveness and inclusion in Italy, a report, an awareness booklet and a training kit were disseminated. Furthermore, guidelines for the identification and assessment of migrants' soft skills were produced.

Results & Impact

Awareness-raising and training activities successfully involved:

- 35 labour market organisations sensitive to the topic of labour inclusion of migrants
- about 100 representatives of the labour market (HR managers, business consultants, employers' associations, chambers of commerce, etc.)
- about 250 representatives of trade unions, third sector organisations, employment centres, vocational training centres or institutional bodies, placement and work guidance services
- about 150 representatives of organisations working in the field of reception and integration (dedicated services of local administrations, SPRAR centres, third sector associations)

Besides, 120 migrants (aged 18 to 64 years old, 46% female and 54% male) took part in the experimentation for the identification and assessment of their soft skills.



The project makes available to labour market stakeholders' know-how, mapping and analysis of good practices for the labour inclusion of migrants. Intervention models for diversity awareness-raising of labour market stakeholders and their training in the field of Diversity Management (DM) as well as a repertoire of soft skills linked to the migratory experience and to the condition of dual membership expendable on the Italian labour market were formulated and disseminated.

The project also promotes the exchange of good practices, the establishment of partnerships and the exchange of experiences between actors working in the field of competence assessment of migrants on a national and European scale.

Employers' interest in the potential represented by migrant human resources increases as well as migrants' awareness about the potential of soft skills in the search for employment and for their own professional development. Finally, DimiCome connects reception/integration organisations and employers, maximizing the impacts of their initiatives in the wider socio-economic fabric.

Lessons learned

The DimiCome project helped to understand how important it is to know the players in the labour market and to promote diversity management within organisations. In this way, Italians and migrants can together improve the productive capacities of the Italian market.

Constraints

For companies, the greatest difficulty was to become aware of the lack of diversity management despite the fact that they were sure that they were using different strategies to create an effective and integrated working environment.

The training provided made it possible to change employers' perspectives and effectively implement good company practices.

For migrants, the greatest difficulty was to reflect on their own skills and abilities and to understand their importance in relation to work experience.

Group work was used to share the difficulties they encountered and to improve their ability to talk about themselves in a job interview.

Replicability

The presence of foreign member organisations from 5 other European countries enabled the dissemination of the importance of Diversity Management both at national and European level, thus multiplying replication possibilities.

More information at

<https://www.ismu.org/progetto-dimicome/>



The greatest difficulty for companies was to become aware of the lack of diversity management despite the fact that they were sure that they were using different strategies to create an effective and integrated working environment.



Download here the publications related to the project (booklet on diversity management & immigrant human resources; guidelines for the identification & assessment of migrants soft skills)



ESIRAS*

Launched in 2018, the one year long ESIRAS (Employability and Social Integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers) project provided asylum seekers & refugees living in 7 European countries with tools and skills to ensure a successful labour market integration. Beneficiaries took part in skill-gaining workshops such as training in basic communication, acquiring a driving license, basic numeracy skills, new technologies workshops, CV writing and preparation for job interviews. Trained volunteers offered beneficiaries support with learning, practicing skills obtained through courses, writing resumes, finding job openings and helped them in everyday situations.



Project beneficiaries are asylum seekers & refugees (all genders, from 18 years old)



Co-funded by the Employment and Social Innovation Programme (European Commission)



Italy (Milan), Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Slovenia



Project run by the International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in cooperation with public & private vocational training centres. Municipality of Milan for the Italian part

Summary

The activities offered to beneficiaries reinforced their basic, transversal and professional skills, giving them a selective advantage with respect to accessing and finding employment. Through engagement and intermediation with potential employers, the ESIRAS beneficiaries increased their opportunities to finding employment. With cooperation and networking with other local associations, beneficiaries were provided with additional support in social integration in their local environment (e.g. learning assistance, children's play, two-way exchange of knowledge/skills/experience, advice on local customs).

Objectives

- to provide greater knowledge and skills with respect to the local socio-economic context
- to facilitate better access to employment and social services
- to bridge the gap of social and cultural understanding on both sides between beneficiaries and employers.

Management & Operation

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) implemented the project activities by coordinating the various vocational training centres, which carried out courses and initiated internships for the beneficiaries. Skills, aspirations and previous experience of beneficiaries were firstly assessed during individual interviews. Beneficiaries then attended preparatory courses for job placement. 127 people participated in specific vocational courses organised at accredited training centres. The evaluation of the project is based on the number of individuals who have found a job. Unfortunately, one year on, most of the beneficiaries have lost their jobs, the traineeships have been ended and have not led to permanent contracts.

Results & Impact

127 people participated in specific vocational courses; 44 apprenticeship contracts, 10 fixed-term contracts, 6 apprenticeship contracts were signed (70% male & 30%

female). On the long run, ESIRAS aimed at improving the integration of beneficiaries on the labor market, their inclusion through vocational training and learning soft skills. ESIRAS ultimately also aimed at answering refugees and asylum seekers' needs.

Lessons learned

Awareness of their abilities enables migrants to enter the labour market more favorably. It is a good starting point to recognize the professionalism of beneficiaries.

Constraints

The real challenge that was not met was the involvement of companies in the labour integration of migrants. The project did not provide intercultural training to the companies in which the beneficiaries were placed.

Replicability

The project was implemented in several countries, so the model of transversal skills training, participation in vocational courses and traineeship activations could already be transferred to the European level.

Policy impact

At the end of the pilot project, not financed further by the European Commission, activities were continued with a new project, ESIR, made possible thanks to a three-year grant from the THSN Foundation and two annual contributions from the Milan Community Foundation and CLDS. The beneficiaries involved in the ESIR project were not refugees and also asylum seekers present in Italy.

More information at

<https://bit.ly/3EdkZse>

Download here the publication "Are you looking for a job in Milan?"



ESPoR

The balance of competencies model "European Skills Portfolio for Refugees" (ESPoR) is a career counseling path that helps refugees to become aware of their skills and resources, to know realistically how well they can employ them in the labor market and to develop an open attitude towards new careers, sometimes more satisfying than those initially desired. Started in Italy in 2018, this 4 years project involved not only Italian stakeholders but also organizations in Germany, France & Spain (exchanges of good practices, experimentation phase).



Project beneficiaries are asylum seekers and refugees above 18 years old (all genders)



Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (European Commission)



Italy, Milan, Rome, Turin, Verona, Udine



Project run by the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in cooperation with Lotta contro l'emarginazione Social Cooperative, Oikos Onlus Association, ENGIM, A. Cross, Consorzio Comunità Brianza; exchanges of good practices with Tür an Tür, Iriv and Cear in Germany, Spain and France

Summary

The ESPoR project enables the evaluation of a skills audit model (Bilancio di competenze (BdC) aiming at making activities for the SIL (Support for Inclusion in the Job Market) more effective.

SIL activities include training courses for professional qualifications and for requalification, organising work experience, validating or certifying professional skills, recognising professional qualifications, active job searching, facilitating job placements, establishing new businesses and self-employment.

The aim is to make the placement of migrants in the workplace faster and more efficient, and as a result help migrants become self-sufficient, by reducing the time they spend in reception centres, and making their integration in the host nation easier.

SIL activities often do not best match the skills, potential and motivation of the migrant with the needs of the Italian job market and with existing job opportunities. An in-depth analysis into immigration policies, as described in the European Migration Network (EMN), has in fact shown that whilst career guidance projects with this specific aim do exist, there is also evidence of their limitations, which the ESPoR project hopes to address and overcome.

These limitations include an insufficient amount of time dedicated to the process, a lack of expertise during the job consultation process that is specific to the target market, and the episodic nature of such consultations. Central to the ESPoR project was the evaluation of a process that will be complementary to the "EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals". The EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals is already recognized at international level for its potential to collect vast amounts of information regarding a migrant's expertise in a systematic and transferable way; however, it is at risk of producing incomplete and unreliable results when adequate skills profiling is not carried out ahead of filling in other information.

Objectives

- to promote the sustainability of ESPoR based SIL activities in reception centres and within existing economic resources and services at regional and national level in charge of examining ways to ensure future sustainability to the BdC model and resulting in new networks and guidelines
- to increase the number of experienced operators that use the BdC ESPoR model as part of SIL career guidance, and define a required skill set with the aim of promoting additional training courses for those working in reception centres. This objective was achieved by training 50 operators at the ESPoR model
- to provide asylum seekers with concrete tools to enhance their individual professional skills and social skills with a view to creating greater proactivity and awareness with regards to job hunting and the integration process. This objective was achieved by trialing ESPoR based SIL career guidance activities on 50 groups of 10 migrants
- to identify ways of making SIL interventions more effective thanks to the targeted introduction of ESPoR. This objective will be achieved by studying the effectiveness of the project through the quantitative and qualitative analysis of data collected during the trial period. The trial will be the subject of publications and presentations at conferences
- to investigate concrete possibilities of transferring the BdC ESPoR model to EU Member States in order to promote its uptake, trialing and dissemination. This objective was achieved by verifying the transferability of the model, and the use of the final document, in the course of relocating migrants in other member states of the European Union, with the collaboration of 3 Associated Partners in Spain, France and Germany



Management & operation

The management of the project is in the hands of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Milano) but each partner carries out the various activities for which it has been involved.

As lead agency, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore evaluated the activities of the piloting and training of operators and produced the Guidelines for a labour market populated by competent, motivated and satisfied migrants. Some researchers wrote also an article, based on questionnaires and focus groups led with operators and refugees on Self-Efficacy Perceptions by Developing Career Adaptability (scan the QR code to download the article for free).

Results & impact

- 500 asylum seekers involved
- 50 operators trained by ESPoR model
- 25 operators trained online by ESPoR model
- 7 memoranda of understanding signed with associations, national association of Italian municipalities (ANCI)

Overall, this project contributes on the long-term to a better recognition of transversal skills which leads to an improvement of the economic and integrative situation.

Lessons learned

Refugees who participated in the experimentation understood the importance of knowing one's own skills before entering the labour market. This awareness allows one to become aware of what one can really do and target oneself more effectively in employment.

Constraints

The duration (2 months) of the orientation and skills assessment programme constituted a challenge for refugees who could lack motivation. Another point concerned active participation, the need to collaborate in the creation of one's own portfolio of competences, to take responsibility for what one wanted to communicate. It turned out to be challenging for operators to propose activities at a time and in a manner best suited to the needs of the beneficiaries.

Using witnesses, people who have understood and used the skills for employment, was a solution to make people understand the importance of self-awareness.

Replicability

Thought was given to potential for replication from the very beginning of ESPoR's project. Exchange of good practices happened with organizations in Germany, France and Spain, where a trial was conducted.

Depending on the country where the project is implemented, the part regarding vocational training and the labour market may need to be adapted.

ESPoR's model is replicable - see activities listed in the handbook downloadable here (see QR code).

Policy impact

The orientation and labour integration of migrants is an issue that concerns Italian and also European policy. The ESPoR model concerns the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and also the Ministry of Education. The scientific referee of the ESPoR project is invited to various political meetings to present the initiative.

More information at

<https://www.espor.it/>



NetWORK

NetWORK is a project developed since November 2017 by the NGO RYSE a.s.b.l. in Luxembourg to increase the employability of young refugees and asylum seekers through hands-on experience and on-the-job training. Project participants volunteer on a regular basis in local cooperatives, services or NGOs, thus enhancing their skillset and increasing their competitiveness in the local job market.



Projects beneficiaries are young refugees & asylum seekers aged 18-35 (all genders)



OEUVRE; Andre Losch Foundation
KPMG; private donations



Luxembourg,
Luxembourg city



Project run by RYSE a.s.b.l. in cooperation with local associations, cooperatives, public & cultural services

Management & Operation

The RYSE (Refugee Youth Support and Empowerment) team meets each beneficiary interested in the project and assesses his*her skills and needs. The various volunteering options are proposed according to the criteria met. After having visited the potential workplace, beneficiaries decide to join it (or not). Beneficiaries are then trained by the service welcoming them and commit to volunteer on a weekly basis for the mid-long term (9-12 months depending on the project).

The RYSE team supervises the volunteering period and follows-up regularly with the beneficiaries and the services involved to monitor the achievements made and to ensure the added value of the process for both parties. Monthly checks and regular feedback sessions with the partnering services and the beneficiaries take place (through feedback forms, face-to-face meetings and follow up calls). Indicators used to evaluate the success of the participation were among the following: frequency of the volunteering, language improvement, personal feeling about the experience, impact on social & cultural integration and on the job search.

Objectives & goals

- to improve the access to the job market
- to promote social and cultural integration
- to provide a local work experience
- to offer opportunities of language practice

Results & impact

Over 50 mentees have participated in the project since its creation (about two thirds of male).

NetWORK offers a targeted transition phase for asylum seekers who can proactively optimize the waiting time of the asylum procedure delaying their entry on the labor market. They acquire skills and experience turning them into assets for the host society. By giving participants the opportunity to play an active role within the host society, participants' experiences of isolation and marginalization also diminish.

Direct interactions between participants and the host society happening during the volunteering experience positively impact the language proficiency of refugees and asylum seekers and raise the awareness of Luxembourgish citizens on the reality of immigration in Luxembourg. Most of the beneficiaries who participated in NetWORK were therefore able to:

- increase their chances to find a job or a vocational training
- prove their proactiveness when confronted with social services
- improve their language skills
- maintain a positive attitude despite the long waiting time of the asylum procedure and feel as active part of the host society
- get to know local cultural rules and behaviors
- make the residence country aware of the benefits of integration

Constraints

Despite the quick success of the project (due to the tailored and very concrete approach adopted), the discrepancy between the high demand coming from the beneficiaries and the limited financial resources constituted an obstacle for RYSE. This prevented the NGO to support more beneficiaries. Due to local rules and administrative obstacles, it was also difficult to gain new partners. These constraints led to a rather restrained offer for beneficiaries, which could then impact their potential participation. To counter this, RYSE is constantly and proactively looking for funding, sponsorship opportunities or state support. The NGO is also very aware of the relevance and positive impact that volunteering experiences in sectors close to the skillset and career ambitions of the beneficiaries could have on them. RYSE proactively raises awareness on its beneficiaries' cause among its network, through i.e. good practices elaborated within dedicated platforms like Agora4Youth, which aims at improving the inclusion of young people.



Lessons learned

The participation to this project makes the integration within the local community easier and enhance the sense of purpose of beneficiaries who are more proactive.

Getting reference letters & certificates from partners involved increases the credibility and competitiveness of beneficiaries on the job market. Residents start seeing refugees as an asset which positively impact the host society. Social workers and psychologists regularly recommend this project to the refugees in order to help them counter depression, loneliness and the burden of isolation.

Replicability

The possibility of promoting volunteering as a means of integration might depend on each country regulations and laws. It is important to monitor this kind of activities to avoid illegal practices and manpower exploitation. For this reason, it is vital to allocate resources to the team responsible of setting the framework and supervising the project and its evolution. Except for this administrative side, the project and practice can be reproduced and extended to other countries as well.

To ensure the success of the project, it is important to maintain a tailored approach as well as an open dialogue and interaction with other services dedicated to that same population. A regular exchange with the public institutions is also important.

More information at

www.RYSELuxembourg.com

www.agora4youth.lu

Contact person

Francesca Tavanti

info@ryseluxembourg.com

Other interesting resources

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftHDuxse2h0>

<https://bit.ly/3DWbJIQ>

<https://www.mudam.com/events/language-cafe>



NetWORK offers a targeted transition phase for asylum seekers who can proactively optimize the waiting time of the asylum procedure delaying their entry on the labor market.



Check out one of the volunteering opportunity in a Luxembourgish cultural institution



RecruitME

Launched by the Luxembourgish NGO RYSE a.s.b.l., RecruitME is an initiative (pilot phase in January 2021) linking mentees with local employers, thus providing a welcome boost to the recruitment process from both sides. The mentees are equipped with an offbeat application pack that is proactively shared with employers, who need, or may need, young motivated candidates with this specific skill set. RYSE acts as an advisor and supports both employers and mentees throughout.



Projects beneficiaries are young refugees & asylum seekers aged 18-35 (all genders)



Luxembourg,
Luxembourg city



OEUVRE nationale de secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte; Andre Losch Foundation; private donations



Project run by RYSE a.s.b.l. in cooperation with local employers, youth inclusion platforms and other services

Management & Operation

The RYSE (Refugee Youth Support and Empowerment) team identifies mentees, prepares & supports them to become competitive candidates for an optimized success rate when it comes to integration on the labour market. The NGO engages across industries & employers in order to maximize the pool of candidates and career options. With this project, RYSE aims at building trust between both mentees and employers, encouraging a change in attitude among employers in order for them to create more inclusive workplaces with enhanced corporate social responsibility. RYSE acts as an advisor for both mentees and employers and supports them throughout the whole process.

The RYSE team monitors the achievements and ensures the added value of the process for both parties thanks to monthly checks and regular feedback sessions with beneficiaries (through feedback forms, face-to-face meetings and follow up calls) and exchanges with employers when needed.

A various range of indicators (i.e. wellbeing, relationship with co-workers, relationship with hierarchy, professional evolution assessment, personal feedback, impact on socio-cultural integration etc.) is used to efficiently evaluate the mentoring's process.

Objectives & goals

- to improve the access to the job market
- to transform potential local unexploited manpower into an asset for the host community
- to promote social and cultural integration

Results & impact

During the pilot phase, 10 people were onboarded in the project and 9 out of 10 found jobs (nearly three quarters male). The implementation of job skills training sessions proves to be an essential tool to prepare participants.

At the same time, despite the willingness of the employers to hire refugees, issues regularly come up with the co-workers. This highlights the need to prepare the teams to work in a multicultural environment where diversity represents an asset instead of an obstacle.

RYSE proposes to employers - on demand - mediation sessions and intercultural communication trainings by experts with the purpose of getting all parties interact for the refugees' successful integration.

Beneficiaries who found jobs were able to operate great changes to their lives: thanks to their working contracts, some were able to rent a private accommodation and offer to themselves and their children normal living conditions outside the migrant shelters.

Having a job enabled them to stop relying on social allowances and get full control of their lives again. It represented a real new start they had been waiting for since their arrival and enabled them to appreciate and contribute to the host society actively.

This should not erase the fact that beneficiaries also reported obstacles like language fluency, cultural differences, racism/microaggressions, understanding of rights and obligations and the different rules at work.

Constraints

Despite the success met during the pilot phase of the project, RYSE is still lacking financial resources and is therefore looking for funding to be able to officially launch RecruitME and extend it to a larger population. Both state funding and private sponsorships are applied for.

The access to the job market is still very limited and bureaucratically difficult for beneficiaries.

These challenges are continuously addressed by the NGO, who, as a member of the Luxembourgish Council for Refugees (LFR), RYSE commits through that platform to discuss at political level simplified measures to enable a better access to the job market for refugees (among other aspects).



Lessons learned

There are several difficulties on the way of employment, ranging from lack of network and language skills to not having diplomas recognized, or lacking educational background. Also, cultural differences between people's home countries and Luxembourg and preconceived notions about refugees (or even prejudices) from the employers and co-workers' side still exist.

The local labour market is still very closed for refugees and being supported by a service that connects them with local employers, as well as receiving the right preparation to be competitive and to know how to interact at work can make a huge difference.

Targeting the companies' corporate social responsibility policy (or similar internal policy) is an effective way to make the host society understand the benefits of diversity and integration.

Replicability

The project can be easily replicated in other countries according to their rules and policy. An effort in terms of increased diversity and social responsibility is essential on the employer's side and partnering with the associations and services which work on the ground is fundamental to get a real insight into the challenges and good practices that could operate a real change.

Indicators developed during the pilot phase of this project in order to evaluate individual achievements (of both beneficiaries and employers) encompass the following:

- Beneficiaries: Gender, age, language fluency, education, diplomas/certificates, work experience, skills, cultural and psychological impact, family situation etc.
- Employers: Size of the company, CSR policies, type of sector, diversity measures and approach, HR availability, willingness to cooperate with RYSE etc.

An effort in terms of increased diversity and social responsibility is essential on the employer's side and partnering with the associations and services which work on the ground is fundamental to get a real insight into the challenges and good practices that could operate a real change.

Policy impact

Together with the Luxembourgish Council for Refugees (LFR), RYSE commits to defend the rights of refugees in Luxembourg and to have regular exchanges at political level in order to facilitate integration and maximize the benefits it generates.

More information at

www.RYSELuxembourg.com

www.lfr.lu

Contact person

Francesca Tavanti

info@ryseluxembourg.com



The local labour market is still very closed for refugees and being supported by a service that connects them with local employers, as well as receiving the right preparation to be competitive and to know how to interact at work can make a huge difference.



Learn more about RYSE's activities here:



Skills for Refugees

Launched in 2021, Skills for Refugees is a 3-year project whose main objective is to help beneficiaries of international protection develop new skills (i.e. CV writing, job interview skills, Hungarian proficiency) so that they can have a better chance of finding a job, either in IKEA stores (main economic partner involved in the project) or in other companies.



Projects beneficiaries are beneficiaries of international protection



IKEA



Hungary, Budapest
parallel programmes run in
Slovakia and the Czech Republic



Project run by IKEA together
with the NGO Menedek

Objectives

- to learn new, employment related skills (CV writing, job interview skills)
- to be invited for an interview at IKEA
- to get hired and secure a long-term employment at IKEA (or elsewhere via the newly learnt skills)
- to learn Hungarian
- overall, to promote the integration of refugees

Management & Operation

Participants take part in Hungarian courses and job clubs focusing on the most important Hungarian labor rights, CV writing and prepare for the job interview. After this first preparation phase, participants get to know IKEA's vacancies and get support with the application process. Successful applicants receive support in integration into their new workplace. In addition, an intercultural training is being provided for the IKEA staff.

Monitoring, evaluation & validation

The local NGO Menedek is responsible for the yearly monitoring of the project Skills for Refugees. It has developed indicators to evaluate the success of the project such as the number of participants employed and the total number of participants in the project.

Results & impact

12 persons took part in the programme during the first year of the project; 9 during the second year. 2022 sees the start of the third year of this project.

Skills for Refugees proved to be highly successful. Some of the people belonging to the most vulnerable strata of the Hungarian labour market receive training to improve their employment skills and receive a special access to a special segment of the labour market- a concrete opportunity to get hired. Some get actually hired and remain employed on the long-term. IKEA also benefits from the project, since it's employee diversity increases, and its existing employees receive a diversity training, which makes the entire workplace become more inclusive, and thus a more attractive place to work.

Constraints

Due to their particular situation, refugees often wish to find a job quickly. Taking part in Skills for Refugees however makes refugees go through the (necessary) whole application process, whose timeline can prevent them from starting to work as quickly as they would wish. Another constraint is lack of language proficiency: though the programme addresses this issue, language learning still takes time and lack of language proficiency can hinder the hiring process. No matter how ambitious and sincere the efforts made by the refugee, if he/she cannot master Hungarian, he/she cannot be immediately hired.

Unfortunately, the majority of the participants do not speak enough Hungarian (even by the end of the program) to get hired.

Replicability

Employment programmes very similar to Skills for Refugees have already been implemented in other countries where IKEA is based, such as Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, Germany etc.

More information at

<https://menedek.hu/en/projects/skills-refugees>

<https://bit.ly/3UmDKjT>

<https://bit.ly/3hze70N>

Contact person

Budai Boglárka



Download here the skills for employment toolkit - how-to guide for opening pathways to decent work for refugees developed by IKEA



Social contact & Wellbeing

Arabic Book fair Sweden*

Arabic Book Fair Sweden was launched in Malmö in 2017, and was a yearly event until 2020. Ibn Rushd Study, a study association in Malmö was involved in arranging the book fair supported by the city of Malmö. It was Scandinavia's first Arabic book fair where a dozen publishers presented poetry, non-fiction, children's books in Arabic. The initiative was started by a group of newly-arrived migrants, and youth volunteers helped with organizing the fair. The fair also included author talks, poetry recitation and music performances.



Project beneficiaries are Arabic speakers, including families and youth (all genders & ages)



Sweden,
Malmö & Skåne Region



Ibn Rushd Study Association, City of Malmö, Malmö City Library, Swedish Arts Council



Project run by the Ibn Rushd Study Association in cooperation with the city of Malmö

Objectives

- to build bridges and creating dialogue with all other actors in Civil society in Malmö
- to present Arabic books to support mother-tongue knowledge, based on Swedish freedom atmosphere
- to create business opportunity for both exhibitors and visitors to interact
- to support integration & democracy by providing space for exchange ideas

association (this is to be done with Ibn Rushd's consent). A much broader board that has members from different areas with different backgrounds, expertise, gender and age would also benefit the project.

The situation with the antisemitic book on the website of the book fair that made the City of Malmö withdraw its funding reminds us how sensitive these issues are and that these kinds of initiatives have to navigate complex political contexts.

Management & Operation

The project was managed by a part-time project manager. The Arabic Book fair was organized under the umbrella of Ibn Rushd, a study association in Sweden.

Constraints

According to the same report publicly available, this project faced many challenges: from the beginning, the idea of a Swedish-Arab cultural exchange was missed (due to the lack of person knowledgeable in Swedish culture and literature). The lack of independence and of financial resources to support the Culture Committee also played in role.

Results & impact

- 100 activities held
- 50 book publishers
- 8,000 book fair visitors

During the book fair, there was a high number of visitors from Arabic-speaking communities, who attended events and showed high interest in Arabic literature. This was not seen afterwards because the project was stopped.

More information at

<https://arabiskabokmassan.se>

Lessons learned

3 consecutive reports show best practices, challenges, and ways forward. The 2019 Report stressed among others the need to have a clear representative of the cultural programme as well as a representative for all seminars and guests who starts working immediately after that the theme of the book fair has been decided. A specific budget should be allocated for this representative. In addition to that, a team should be employed all year long to ensure the success of the project.

Besides, the book fair needs to become an independent organization disconnected from Ibn Rushd's study

She4She

She4She is a self-organized association dedicated to refugee and migrant women's self-expression and wellbeing through art, especially through the use of art-therapy. Art pieces are created before being exhibited (i.e. street poster exhibition of drawings). The last painting exhibition in March 2022, "Canvases of the Future" was installed in one of Budapest's local municipality's building, therefore accessible to local employees and municipality's users. Guided tours of the exhibition were organized and attended by locals as well as school groups. Besides, migrant women of She4She offer various classes to each other (arts, yoga, kids' workshop) and also advocate for their rights.



Projects beneficiaries are refugee women (artists) & local visitors (audience)



Hungary, Budapest



Project run by She4She in cooperation with the local municipality Józsefváros (Budapest 8th district)

Objectives

- to process traumas through art-therapy
- to share identity, culture and experiences with locals through arts
- to build a community, a safe space for migrant and refugee women

Management & Operation

She4She is a self-organized association. It is very informal, with migrant (and refugee) women in the board and the membership. Regular meetings are organized.

Results & impact

There is no systematic tracking of outcomes or results. 10+ migrant/ refugee women gather weekly and 5 refugee artists exhibited artwork.

She4She is a small self-organized association of migrant women. It impacts a small number of women, but we selected this initiative as it is an important example of migrants' resilience and place making in an essentially hostile environment. Hungary being a non-integration regime, institutions working in the field of integration have been dismantled and immigrants put in the focus of scapegoating populist discourses. Migrant women of colour and of Muslim faith face multiple discrimination and hardships. She 4She was created by them, for them and offers a safe space for them to express themselves through arts.

There is no impact on the financial or existential conditions of members, however it is likely to contribute to their mental wellbeing.

The exhibition organized in partnership with the municipality was a great occasion to share migrants' experiences through arts. It was visited by several dozen people, who were able to engage with the traumatic experiences of refugees during their flight and arrival and detention in Hungary.

Constraints

Lack of funding is the main constraint, therefore leading to a restricted offer for beneficiaries. With no funding, the organization remains very informal and builds on exclusively on volunteer work of its members. Most migrant women (who both implement the project and benefit from it) have little chance to join as volunteers for their lack of time and resources.

Replicability

Migrant women's self-organization and safe space for creative activities, sharing and learning is important and instrumental in them feeling more confident. Such communities are even more important for Muslim women, whose opportunities for socializing are even more limited in Hungary.

Such association should ideally be initiated by immigrant women themselves rather than a state or another majority actor.

More information at

https://www.she4she.hu/about_us

<https://bit.ly/3hLMeCT>

Learn more about She4She here



Stand and Be Counted Theatre

Founded in 2010, Stand & Be Counted (SBC) is the UK's first Theatre Company of Sanctuary (one of the "Sanctuary Awards", more info in the links p.32), committed to making work with and for people seeking sanctuary in the UK. Their work sits at the intersection of arts, culture and social activism, merging multilingual new writing, live music, physical performance and digital arts. They make small-mid scale contemporary theatre, large-scale community performance projects, educational & empowerment workshops, interactive films, audio adventures, documentaries and site-specific performance. SBC Theatre delivers learning programmes for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants and provides creative skills for employment training, public speaking and campaign training, performance making and wellbeing projects throughout the year.



Projects beneficiaries are children, young people, families and individuals seeking sanctuary



United Kingdom,
Sheffield and Yorkshire Region



Charitable



Project run by SBC Theatre in partnership with civil society organisations

Summary

SBC's approach to supporting the integration of sanctuary seekers in England is to work across multiple levels and spaces of change:

- **Personal:** SBC's approach to welcome through making art and being creative within group settings supports the confidence and wellbeing of sanctuary seekers. The fun and playful approach to communication, expression and relationship building supports people to engage in new opportunities that counter the harshness of everyday life for many sanctuary seekers.
- **Communal:** An important part of SBC's approach is to work with people within the communities that they are building their lives within. Creating culturally safe spaces for self expression, relationship building, and skills development can support positive place-based relationships for people, and help sanctuary seekers to identify as contributors in their local context. Doing this within groups for people with shared lived experiences also builds confidence that can lead to wider engagement within towns and cities. This often gives rise to collaboration between diverse communities building their lives in a place, promoting inclusion and cohesion within local areas.
- **Societal:** In collaboration with the sanctuary seekers engaged in community-based initiatives, SBC makes live and digital theatre and has a proud record for platforming new artists and welcoming new audiences. Their work is innovative and adventurous, merging lived experience with new ideas. These public performances and digital outputs are generated in response to the issues affecting sanctuary seekers' lives, and their aspirations for change. Live and digital performances become interventions into the wider public discourse, facilitating understanding and solidarity in working towards inclusive social change for sanctuary seekers.

- **Political:** Within SBC's participatory practice with sanctuary seekers, arts-based educational and empowerment workshops refine knowledge on the issues affecting their lives, identify areas for intervention, and stakeholders to influence. This work privileges sanctuary seekers' perspectives in advocacy efforts that aim to lead to policy and practice impact. Furthermore, SBC's touring theatre projects are campaigns-based and support advocacy addressing specific social harms. This contributes to change in the wider context and supports sanctuary seekers' experience of solidarity towards an enabling environment for their integration.

Stakeholders & policymakers involved

SBC works in partnership with civil society organisations to design and deliver programming that supports the wellbeing, development, integration and advocacy of sanctuary seekers. These partnerships, including within the theatre companies of sanctuary network facilitate more joined up and holistic approaches to 'integration' work on the ground, and the development of concrete policy recommendations. As the first theatre company of sanctuary, SBC's website features a toolkit on how other companies can implement a sanctuary-based approach in their practice, which integrally involves a commitment to learning, embedding and sharing, with rather than for, people seeking sanctuary.

Gender and age dimension

Inclusive and culturally safe spaces are created for different genders to participate together within arts initiatives. A range of adult programmes are available in different towns and cities - supporting people aged 18+



to build community, strengthen their wellbeing and lead advocacy for positive social change. Besides, the Sheffield Youth Theatre of Sanctuary is made of two age groups: 5-15 year olds and 16-29 year olds.

Objectives

SBC's work with sanctuary seekers has multiple objectives, including:

- building confidence and positively affecting wellbeing
- enabling positive relationships and connections with others
- supporting language learning and engagement with diverse cultural identities of people in their communities
- developing consciousness of their rights and claims in the world
- ensuring that the multiple stories and narratives of sanctuary seekers are recognised, valued and heard in wider publics

SBC's collaborations with civil society and theatres of sanctuary work towards:

- strengthening culturally safe spaces for sanctuary seekers to thrive within as they build their lives in a new place
- developing arts-based methodologies for participatory education, empowerment and learning that center sanctuary seekers in the processes of change that affect their lives
- facilitating access to and engagement with the arts and cultural sectors for sanctuary seekers
- through arts-based activism making visible the harms caused by the hostile environment in the UK, and the possibilities of change

Management & operation

SBC Theatre is a group of creative professionals and artists committed to making work with, and for those seeking sanctuary in the UK and internationally. In 2022 SBC had four core staff and worked with 45+ freelancers. SBC is committed to ensuring that people with lived experience of migration and seeking sanctuary are in positions of leadership across all areas of their work, including within the governing body for the charity.

Monitoring, evaluation & validation

SBC Theatre monitors participation of sanctuary seekers in their programming, however, takes a flexible approach to attendance to ensure that sanctuary seekers are able to participate when it is appropriate for them, and to reduce barriers to entry. SBC is developing a new, sanctuary specific co-created evaluation model and policy. SBC will be publishing their evaluation material and techniques to support other organisations by sharing best practice, leading to further impact.

Results & impact

SBC Theatre's work delivers results across a range of areas and capturing change in the lives of the sanctuary seekers involved is complex. Key results to highlight include:

- english classes for newcomers on ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) waiting lists
- creative Skills for Employment programmes to prepare refugees and people seeking asylum for interviews and identifying local employment and volunteer opportunities
- confidence building and wellbeing support programmes for victims of trauma and displacement
- design of employment curriculums to ensure better understanding of employment rights and navigation of the UK asylum, health, housing and benefit systems
- supportive community networks that promote social cohesion and integration with wider benefits accruing to the host communities through volunteering and active citizenship
- urgent, joyful and educational arts and performance projects
- partnerships with larger organisations such as Coventry City of Culture Trust, and the University of Sheffield to promote, include and celebrate the sharing of every culture in national festivals

Through a rigorous and adventurous co-creation programme SBC provides thousands of people seeking sanctuary with regular, long-term making opportunities and events in order to celebrate, platform and ensure equality of opportunity.

Reach of wellbeing and integration initiatives and key measures of impact include:

- since 2016, SBC has worked with over 8,000 project & workshop participants
- communication skills, confidence, self-expression and wellbeing
- the tools to manage daily stress and confidently represent themselves
- remembering past abilities, to build strength of self and hope for the future
- meaningful relationships and subjective sense of belonging
- positive intercultural experiences leading to opportunities for collaboration
- championing sanctuary seekers as artists supporting confidence and pathways into the arts and cultural sector

Methodological and artistic innovation and impact include:

- through the creative and reflexive ideas of participants, SBC's work establishes that words do not always support sanctuary seekers to connect to and communicate complex experiences in a culturally and emotionally appropriate way



- development of a culturally safe space, where people can be and behave in a way that respects diverse starting points. People are supported to explore ways to engage and share, without experiences being triggering of harmful institutional settings, or difficult memories.
- through long-term engagement, these methods can support people to reconnect to their sense of self, to have control of the narratives of their identities and to have the tools to build their relationships with community and society
- formalising a Best Practice Toolkit for working creatively with people seeking sanctuary, via their Welcome Consortium, directly addressing the lack of current national guidelines

Equity and inclusion in accessing arts and culture:

- since 2016, SBC productions have played across 58 venues, with 71.5% of audiences being new to the venue the performance is presenting in
- ensuring tickets and opportunities are available for people seeking sanctuary
- training a network of arts professionals who can join SBC in putting people seeking sanctuary at the top of their priority list
- supporting and challenging other arts organisations to become involved in this work

Campaigning Theatre and sanctuary-seeker led advocacy:

- being ambassadors for the work that City of Sanctuary does across the UK
- WHERE WE BEGAN led by Tafadzwa Muchenje is SBC's critically acclaimed touring production, and was continued as a documentary, WHERE WE ARE, during the pandemic focusing on migrant rights in the time of COVID-19 – this work was commissioned by ArtReach and Journeys Festival International
- HAVE YOUR PASSPORT READY, led by Syrian brothers Khaled & Mohammad Aljawad was named 'Game of the Week' by The Observer
- TANJA toured to 19 venues across two national tours and was presented at Parliament to 100s of cross-party MPs, led by Emily Ntshangase, a former Yarl's Wood Removal Centre detainee

Lessons learned

SBC is developing and implementing an evaluation approach which puts people with migration-experiences at the centre. This will go towards their Welcome Toolkit - a practical industry guide including national guidelines, policies, session plans, care plans, case studies. The Welcome Toolkit is the first guidance and support package of its kind and crucial to the development of further organisations within the arts sector working in this way - this pack will go some way in addressing the postcode lottery (the unequal provision of services depending on one's postcode) that is safe, empowering and meaningful arts opportunities for people seeking sanctuary wherever they are placed in the UK. It is an urgent tool to ensure best practice and genuine inclusion.

Constraints

The constraints faced reflect the challenges faced in the wider sector.

- limited funding for arts and cultural, or migration sector initiatives, impacting sustainability of interventions
- the harmful impact of the hostile environment on sanctuary seekers' everyday wellbeing and freedoms can disrupt engagement in the safe spaces being produced
- the insecure settlement experiences that new arrivals face, often being moved on from towns and cities that they have been placed in whilst waiting for asylum housing, can undermine ties and solidarities that have been produced
- engaging with stakeholders and decision-makers as audiences that can enter into coproducing change at the local, regional and national level. This is an area of future development being explored with University of Sheffield researchers

Replicability

By taking a participatory and place-based approach to developing initiatives that respond to the realities, needs and aspirations of particular communities. Within this, SBC has developed a set of overarching framings that reflect the starting points for different interventions. These include the following initiatives which have taken place across the Midlands and Yorkshire regions:

- Youth Theatre of Sanctuary
- Soap Box inclusion and advocacy groups
- Creative Skills and Employment
- Large Scale immersive performance arts
- Co-created digital and live production

Policy impact

SBC co-founded the Welcome Consortium: a grass-roots movement for theatre-makers building a culture of welcome within communities. This intersects with the theatre of sanctuary network, a pro-active wing of the City of Sanctuary UK movement that also includes schools, colleges and universities of sanctuary and many other community-oriented initiatives. From this platform SBC also campaigns for change, including through theatre that tours nationally and internationally. SBC Theatre believes that art and activism are not mutually exclusive and that art can be a tool for campaigning for change in policy. In 2020, SBC undertook a targeted campaign for the resumption of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, sending a series of widely supported open letters to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Home Secretary and Culture Secretary. Working with Culture Commons, Theatre Companies of Sanctuary network and Refugee Action, SBC contributed to a process drawing up concrete policy recommendations to influence the UK Government ahead of a 2021 Comprehensive Spending Review.



From 2022 SBC Theatre are partnering with Culture Commons to navigate a dialogue with the Home Office to influence policy in the interests of people seeking sanctuary, providing SBC with an opportunity to make the case for the role that the arts and cultural activity can play in welcoming people to the UK properly.

Related resources

SBC's Learning programme: resources to use and share in creating spaces of sanctuary through the arts available at www.sbctheatre.co.uk/learning

Have Your Passport Ready: A gaming adventure through the UK's hostile environment available at haveyourpassportready.co.uk

Becoming Us: An interactive exhibition presenting narratives of diversity and inclusion by young sanctuary seekers and their allies available at www.sbctheatre.co.uk/becomingus

My World My Story: An interactive exhibition made by sanctuary seekers sharing their ideas and responses to the issues important to them available at www.sbctheatre.co.uk/my-world-my-story-exhibition

More information at

[Theatres of Sanctuary - Arts Stream of Sanctuary \(cityofsanctuary.org\)](http://TheatresofSanctuary-ArtsStreamofSanctuary.cityofsanctuary.org)
www.sbctheatre.co.uk
[City of Sanctuary - City of Sanctuary UK](http://CityofSanctuary-CityofSanctuaryUK)

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More information about
Stand and Be Counted
Theatre's work here



Within Stand and Be Counted's participatory practice with sanctuary seekers, arts-based educational and empowerment workshops refine knowledge on the issues affecting their lives, identify areas for intervention, and stakeholders to influence. This work privileges sanctuary seekers' perspectives in advocacy efforts that aim to lead to policy and practice impact.



Weaving Futures

Weaving Futures is a series of open ateliers (songwriting, foodscaping, storytelling, hip hop, textile, photo & film) to co-create knowledge, share skills, and make place and space through culture. Between March 2021 and July 2022, creative inhabitants of Sanem were invited to join making tools and tunes for a pluriversal future and creating new common narratives. Developed by designer Annelys de Vet and the Douri association, inhabitants are invited for engaging workshops; from video-diaries to upcycled fashion, from food traditions to rock songs, from French hip hop to Congolese Sape and do-it-yourself zines.



Project beneficiaries are inhabitants of Sanem (all genders & ages)



Luxembourg, Sanem



Municipality of Sanem



Project run by the NGO DOURI asbl in cooperation with the municipality of Sanem, Esch2022 and the Disarming Design Department (Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam)

Summary

At the invitation of the municipality of Sanem, a group of artists from the Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam, hosted a series of ateliers on collaborative forms of making. This project wanted to "exercise" the following questions:

- How can we envision conditions that make communal futures possible?
- Can we together build new, relational modes of knowing, being and doing?
- Can we open up spaces attuned to diverse temporalities and worldviews?

The different ateliers were a way to unpack these questions, connected to the local context in Sanem. Through acts of making, designing, materiality, music and sharing space and dialogues, and archive and reflect together on these experiences.

Objectives

- to integrate youth of locals and newcomers in Sanem throughout opening spaces to co-exist and co-create
- to encourage new sociabilities and spaces of expression
- to inspire unity and harmony by sharing stories and experiences

Management & Operation

Weaving futures creative ateliers are hosted by artists of the foyer in Sanem and beyond. The collective work between artists and participants became a creative laboratory, where diverse and varied actors practiced culture in all its forms.

Starting from the artistic practices and interests of the residents of the foyer, a series of ateliers was developed. Each focused on one medium, tool or material, and was organised together with an invited (international) designer or artist. A local core-team was responsible for the set-up and coordination of the ateliers.

Monitoring, evaluation & validation

The first evaluation took place after the first edition of the ateliers in summer 2021 by collecting feedback from the facilitators and the participants through focus groups (efficiency, goals, opportunities and challenges) in order to find solutions that helps to meet the need of participants and coordinators as well.

A second evaluation took place during a symposium where the project's process was shared and discussed with funders and also with other leaders of associations (Luxembourgish Red Cross, Culture for all, Migration and Inclusive Societies). A third and last evaluation is currently being conducted.

Results & impact

In total, 20 artists facilitated workshops which were attended by more than 100 participants (60% female).

On the long-term, Weaving Futures contributes to:

- raise consciousness about environmental and social issues like global warming, consumer culture, immigration and integrating cultures, phobias and -isms within the local community
- empower individual and collectives by creating common platforms and spaces with the goal of tightening community laces and making access to a state of belonging and hope
- create a safe space for participants to share their skills and opinions
- build social and artistic projects based on what beneficiaries want and need to learn and inquire



Lessons learned

The workshops turned out to be a field of experiences and opportunities to grow. One of the main lessons learned from Weaving Futures is the importance to broaden perspectives regarding i.e. communication in that sense that people communicate with much more than languages. Problem-solving skills, clear communication are keys.

Constraints

The project started during the Covid19 pandemic and went on since then. Recruitment and access to participants were made difficult since this corresponds to a phase when collectively everyone was exhausted of change. Reaching other communities and making the project visible to all were also challenging.

Replicability

Weaving Futures' project is replicable, since it is based primarily on creativity, community, and flexibility.

Policy impact

A symposium on collaborative practices in the field of art & migration with local stakeholders and participants of Weaving Futures was organized. The commune of Sanem decided after it to make its communication more inclusive and accessible to diverse communities by adding English versions on to their social media communications.

Details about the symposium organized are available here: <https://weavingfutures.lu/festival/symposium>

More information at

<https://youtu.be/pAQZKYksf70>

<https://bit.ly/3DYkORG>

Related resources

Film director Adolf El Assal visited the atelier, shared his knowledge and engaged in a moving conversation on film and the position of the filmmaker (stills and motion for emotions atelier), watch more of it here:

<https://vimeo.com/645973534>



Watch here a documentary about the first series of workshops



Weaving Futures created a space where people with different histories have built conversations beyond language. While working with textile, music and image, the ateliers were a starting point to bring people together and nourish their dreams. It offered a place to practice new ideas and to build generous communities. We believe that it's through artistic practice that we can materialise questions that language cannot express, and make us see what the future could make possible.



Retrieved from Weaving Futures' website

Etnoliga

Initiated in 2005 and inspired by several very successful football tournaments for young refugees, Etnoliga is a multicultural amateur football league aiming at supporting integration, promoting cultural diversity, fighting against racism & discrimination. Its motto reflects this aim: “We play football against racism, sexism and homophobia. To integrate migrants and refugees. To support women and tackle discrimination. To promote fair play, break stereotypes and learn from each other”. Gradually, the sport programme has been complemented by multicultural events aimed at getting to know each other’s cultures. Etnoliga also organizes charity tournaments and international youth exchanges.



Projects beneficiaries are migrants and refugees as well as other people experiencing discrimination



Poland,
Warsaw



Kronenberg Foundation, Humanity Now, Adidas, FARE networks, Warsaw municipality, private donors



Project run by Fundacja dla Wolności (Foundation for Freedom)

Summary

Etnoliga has grown to around 15-20 teams and ca 500 people (from 16 years old with parents’ consent) from diverse countries engaged yearly. Most of the participants are between 20 and 40 years old. The season begins in September and Etnoliga works like the majority of football leagues by a round-robin system with weekly matches, table and accumulating points.

Etnoliga received several European prizes for sports programmes aimed at integration (Fare Network 20 Years Awards in 2019 & UEFA Best Grassroots Project in 2020). It was shortlisted in 2017 for the Beyond Sport Global Awards & in 2019 for the #BeInclusive EU Sport Awards.

Etnoliga is also member of FARE, pan-european umbrella organization tackling discrimination in football.

Although the general rules are similar to the majority of football leagues, the scoring system rewards fair play, volunteering and off-pitch activities. In line with inclusive and democratic character, players discuss and establish extra rules when needed. Participation is free of charge. In terms of off-pitch activities, every team hosts a match day: provides logistics, prepares contests, refreshments, thematic presentations etc.

Like each NGO, the Foundation for Freedom is obliged to produce yearly reports of their activities. They are publicly available on their webpage. No other evaluation documents are to be found on the webpage. However, the awards received seem to indicate that Etnoliga is a programme validated by external institutions.

Gender dimension

Etnoliga actively supports women’s integration in sport. Teams are mixed and there is a parity: there must be at least 3 women per team and at least 2 of them on the pitch. Apart from that, Etnoliga trains young women to become coaches and work in the football industry.

Objectives

- to promote integration of migrants and refugees through sport
- to empower and integrate different groups at risk of exclusion
- to fight against racism and discrimination
- to connect people of diverse origins, skin colour, gender and religion

Management & Operation

The project is coordinated by Krzysztof Jarymowicz from Foundation for Freedom, accompanied by an assistant and several volunteers. There are also professional referees.

Results & Impact

- 2 seasons and 200+ official league games per year
- 500+ regular adult players from more than 100 countries, of all ages, professions and genders

On the basis of Etnoliga and other best European practices, they have built a programme combining sport and education in two refugee centers in Warsaw. In 2020, 58 children and 37 women participated in these activities.

Thanks to low entry barriers (no fees, no need to speak Polish to play football, openness to all nationalities, genders, etc.), Etnoliga creates a safe space for newly arrived migrants to spend their free time, meet new people and become part of a community. Indeed, interviewing several players we could see that joining Etnoliga was an important step in their social integration in Warsaw. Through sport and off-pitch activities described above, Etnoliga improves participants’ emotional wellbeing, enhances bonds with peers, increases self-confidence, helps to learn Polish, improves communication and other skills.



Lessons learned

- football may be a good way of inclusion and integration thanks to its popularity and low entry barriers (both linguistic and economic)
- in order to fulfil the goal of integration and to attract migrants in vulnerable situations systematic and well planned efforts must be made (e.g. reaching out to centres for refugees, establishing the 'diversity rule' in the teams, organising multicultural events etc.)

Constraints

One of the challenges that appeared in the past was the emergence of teams consisting of players of only one nationality and occasional tensions between national teams. However, this challenge was managed by introducing the diversity rule: there must be members of at least 3 nationalities in the team. It seems that this problem no longer exists.

Replicability

Etnoliga potential for replicability is particularly relevant in larger cities with a diverse migrant population.

More information at

<https://bit.ly/3HM3DWN>

<https://www.etnoliga.org/en/media-2/>

<https://www.facebook.com/etnoliga>

Contact person

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Football is the most popular game in the world. It connects people regardless their skin color, gender, or religion. This is the kind of football we play. We integrate migrants, support women, promote fair play, break stereotypes, and learn from other cultures.



Retrieved from
Etnoliga's website



Find out more about
Etnoliga's and publications
related to the project here



The Belonging group - FURD

Football Unites Racism Divides Education Trust (FURD) is a youth and social inclusion project and charity based in Sheffield, England, which works locally, nationally and internationally to combat racism, transform young people's futures & increase understanding between different communities. The 'Belonging' group, which has worked with refugees and asylum-seekers since 2012, is a wellbeing initiative centred around community-based football as a space of social inclusion. It has made a difference to the lives of many vulnerable young people that have moved to Sheffield. It helps to prevent social isolation, raise awareness, improve mental and physical health, establish partnership work and facilitate everyday wellbeing for those beyond the margins of the mainstream. Through the pre-existing Belonging group, young people with migration experiences have been involved in co-designing a new Centre for Development. The purpose of this centre is to provide holistic support and complementary education that facilitates positive shifts in young migrants' learning outcomes and the building of community.



Projects beneficiaries are asylum seeking, migration experienced and refugee background young people, primarily aged 16-29 years old



Charitable



United Kingdom,
Sheffield



Project run by Football Unites Racism Divides Educational Trust (FURD), supported by partnership working with local civil society and funders

Summary

FURD has worked over the last 10 years to support newly arrived asylum seekers aged 16 and above through their Belonging group. This work has been evolving with increasing awareness about the issues faced by migrants: the complex trauma that they carry from their experience; prolonged periods of waiting for legal decisions to secure their asylum status in the UK leading to poor mental health and poor employment and education outcomes; and their experiences of everyday and institutional racism as they build their lives. In South Yorkshire, there are extremely limited support services for young people with migration experiences, in particular for young adults outside of the state care and protection system and related pathways.

FURD is providing a space of belonging for young people that are otherwise isolated, living in fear and uncertainty, and prevented from accessing formal English language learning, education and the right to work. These issues have been highlighted in recent research ('MIMY' 2022) undertaken by the University of Sheffield, which has made visible the support needs of young migrants in Sheffield, and that these have been amplified by COVID-19, particularly the isolation and relative detachment of young asylum-seekers and refugees from support and opportunity structures (e.g. confinement to hotels, difficulties in establishing personal connections and networks of support).

There is a growing evidence base showing how sports can help newly arrived individuals to integrate within established communities and ease loneliness (Nunn et al. 2022; Blachnicka-Ciacek and Trabka 2022). In 2019, Unicef undertook a global literature review on Sports for Development and found that sport can be a positive factor in four key areas of children's lives: Education, Social Inclusion, Child Protection, and Empowerment. These insights are also reflected in FURD's own Big Lottery-funded research project (Stone and FURD 2013) which establishes that football facilitates a sense of belonging at the intersection of personal identity, community interactions and expression of culture. FURD's work with young refugees, migrants and asylum seekers currently focuses on two key areas:

- living healthy lives: Building physical and mental wellbeing through sports, namely football, tailored in house with support of FURD coaches. Group work and 1-to-1 support on physical and mental health and wellbeing, with dedicated youth work staff who have mental health training, addressing issues of inequality, with signposting and referrals for more complex work. Although they do not take a case work model, their skilled staff provides care, support and safeguarding based on their experiences in aftercare, including for staff and volunteers.
- strengthening civic participation: All activities are designed to strengthen and support young people's voice and leadership so as to influence change in



their lives. There are opportunities for young participants to develop leadership opportunities through volunteering pathways within FURD, including collaboration in action research and youth-led community development projects which would be facilitated through partnership working. The FURD Young Migrants' Centre for Development has designed and piloted a 12-week programme of activities and curriculum to support young migrants newly arrived and building their lives in Sheffield. In addition to the focus on Living Healthy Lives and Strengthening Civic Participation, the Centre for Development aims to provide:

- foundational youth development activities: to support personal and social development through a trauma-informed approach. The aim is to provide information and build critical awareness of issues of legal status, rights and resources. The Centre focuses on building foundations for longer-term change with and for young people. This includes personal support through mentoring toward building a secure future.
- vocational and educational growth: the Centre aims to create a safe space to improve digital and other literacy skills. This is combined with basic functional skills training in English, Maths, and financial literacy and cultural competencies to thrive over the longer term. Pathway planning includes 1-to-1 employment and education mentoring. This can be backed up with volunteering opportunities at FURD which provide insight into diverse employment pathways including fields such as youth and social work, education and health and wellbeing services.
- anti-racism and non-discrimination: This underpins all of the work at the Centre, which has been established to address racial inequalities faced by young people building their lives in the UK. They will address the causes and consequences of racism and discrimination and strengthen participants' understanding of human rights, tackling discrimination.

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Stone, C. (2013). Football- A Shared Sense of Belonging? Final Report on the Role of Football in the Lives of Refugees and Asylum Seekers. Sheffield: Football Unites Racism Divides.

Stakeholders & policymakers involved

There is a network of groups and organisations in the Sheffield area which supports refugees and asylum-seekers, and FURD has built relationships with many of these through previous and current work with refugees-

and asylum-seekers. These include ASSIST Sheffield, Open Kitchen Social Club, City of Sanctuary, Red Cross, Mears foundation and many more. Through these partnerships, they have built regular referral support for clients facing vulnerable circumstances and shared resources and knowledge to support clients further. Partnerships facilitate legal advice, housing, and mental and physical health support to ensure that young people feel secure within their environments, and futures.

Gender dimension

Young men and young women participate in targeted community football groups and are being brought together in relational learning through the Centre for Development.

Objectives

- to tackle isolation and loneliness and bring refugees and asylum seekers together to form friendships
- to provide activities and events that bring people from different backgrounds together, build positive relationships to reduce social isolation and enable participants to develop social networks
- to address the life conditions and immediate needs of youth and build the self-esteem, skills and cultural understanding young migrants
- to develop leadership opportunities through volunteering pathways within FURD, supporting longer term developmental pathways around education, employment and civic participation

Management & Operation

FURD's work with young asylum seekers, refugees and migrants is based on the experience and resource that FURD has fostered in over 20 years of work with young people and adults from marginalised backgrounds and communities. FURD are embedded in the local community and many of their staff grew up in the local area and have progressed through FURD. They have a team of experienced and multi-skilled staff, which includes project managers/workers, youth workers, teacher/trainers and sports coaches, all of whom are highly qualified and come from a diverse range of backgrounds; reflective of the client groups they support. Additionally, many of their staff have experienced similar journeys to those of their clients, and so are able to draw on their own personal experiences.

Their approach is underpinned by their ongoing work at FURD to understand and address the inequalities that young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds experience in accessing opportunities and achieving outcomes. An important part of the sustainability of this work is fostered by young people themselves: Young leaders emerge within the programme, and take on volunteer leadership roles to support other young people who continue to build skills for future employment.



Monitoring, evaluation & validation

FURD undertakes monitoring and evaluation work for all of their charitable funding, ensuring that they are monitoring the aims and objectives of their work.

The foundations of this work grew from a 3-year research project funded by the Big Lottery, which ran from 2010 to 2013. The project sought to increase their understanding about how cultural activities such as football, and sport more widely, can benefit new arrivals to this country in achieving a sense of mutual belonging. The research was led by Dr Chris Stone but opportunities were available for interested people, in particular those from a refugee background themselves, to take part in the research by sharing their own experiences and talking to others about the issues raised.

Key findings were that football provides routine and consistency in young lives, and its familiarity relieves pressures of building cultural and social understanding in a new place. Football also provides an opportunity to build connections around shared interests, facilitating diverse lives to come together. At the same time it is a space of developmental learning enabling plurality. It is also a space where young people are able to exert power and control in their lives when they may otherwise feel powerless.

FURD is capturing change in the Belonging group through a participatory approach to learning and evaluation. They are doing this by working with young people to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework that meets their aspirations for change, alongside wider youth development indicators identified within the youth work and migrant support sector evidence base. For example young people are capturing stories of 'Most Significant Change', which will help FURD understand insights within young people's longer term relationship with their work. As the programming evolves, there is an aspiration to set up a youth advisory panel for monitoring and evaluating the FURD Young Migrants' Centre for Development.

Results & impact

- in the last 10 years, FURD has directly supported over 500 refugees through various activities to improve their physical and mental health
- 30-40 young people attend weekly football for development sessions, prepare and eat food together and access wider wellbeing activities, unstructured youth work and receive referrals to wider support services
- through these sessions young people develop relationships with their peers. People bond over common interests and identities such as their local area, food, (through history and storytelling), ethnic or cultural, backgrounds building a sense of belonging
- sports coaches and practitioners observe an increase in confidence, social activity, enjoyment and sense of purpose gained by beneficiaries
- through the 'Introduction to Community Coaching' course 15 participants' increased knowledge and

understanding about pathways to football & sports education developed practical skills (Coaching, Playing, and Refereeing) in addition to developing an understanding of working with people in the social context of the sport of football; three developed a profile working towards level 1 FA courses

- through the FURD Young Migrants' Centre for Development pilot young people received more structured support developing skills such as cooking, IT and English language. This was developed through group activities which provided the setting for social relationships to form, providing the tools to enable participants to lead healthier and more connected lives
- youth volunteers have been supported through in-depth mentoring and pathway planning, which has led to further youth leadership within the Belonging group, and the piloting of the Centre for Development

From the outset, people with lived experience of migration have driven the design and development of what has become known as the Belonging group at FURD. This work has helped individuals build a sense of mutual belonging, establish networks of social support, connect with local, non-migrant young people, and become orientated toward educational and employment pathways. FURD takes a preventive approach to ensure that newly arrived young and adult migrants are supported with care and guided to build empowered pathways. From their experience, FURD has learned that people from migrant backgrounds are deeply committed to improving their own lives, and aspire to be a positive force within inclusive communities in Sheffield and the UK.

Lessons learned

The evolution of the Belonging group work, into a Young Migrants' Centre for Development provides important lesson learning from this community-based work. The Young Migrants Centre for Development is a response to youth aspirations to ensure that development pathways are strengthened for young people within their wider wellbeing services. A Centre was developed through a youth informed process which started with youth consultations in October 2019.

This paved the way for a 12 weeks innovative football development course 'Introduction to Community Coaching' in association with Sheffield United Community Foundation to create a pathway or access into existing football education or industry. This was a direct response to young people's aspirations for structured, developmental and educational opportunities alongside the informal, convivial belonging built through the informal football sessions. Following this, they started a programme of mentoring to support regular coaching through key decisions. Then in June 2021, coming out of lock down another set of consultations with young people highlighted the gaps in service provision to enable young migrants to thrive within their wider social, educational and economic environments.



This led to the design of a wider structured initiative, now known as The Young Migrants' Centre for Development. The FURD Young Migrants' Centre for Development has designed a 12-week programme of activities and curriculum to support young migrants newly arrived and building their lives in Sheffield. The curriculum has been informed by young people themselves and was shaped through a pilot initiative with 8 young people, funded by The Mears Foundation. Their people centred and co-produced approach led to an important insight within this pilot, which was the need for more focused sessions around racism and discrimination. This responds not only to legacies of racial inequalities in the UK, but also directly to the increasingly hostile context for immigration and integration. Given this hostile context, their asset-based participatory approach also means that the curriculum is strengths-oriented, and meeting young people's desires towards strengthened social interactions, foundations of education, and participating in public life so as to build inclusive communities.

Constraints

Challenges faced by an organisation like FURD are linked to being able to meet the complex needs of young people with migration experiences in the UK. The work around football as a space of belonging provides critical wellbeing and developmental support for young people on a weekly basis. However within a wider context of a decade of austerity, the post-pandemic recovery, cost of living crisis and recession, youth and migrant support sector services are depleting. Young people are in need of focused developmental support, that follows an empowering youth work model, however the constraints to gaining funding for this longer-term accompaniment are vast.

Replicability

FURD's focus on health and wellbeing is suggested to be an important entry point for community engagement. Rather than starting with narratives of poor mental health, FURD emphasises the role of togetherness in understanding and generating community assets. Beneficiaries are positioned as contributing to community-building, with value given to the role that they play in supporting themselves and others, whatever the contribution – whether as participants, or volunteers.

Being community-based the physical location of the activities creates accessibility, and inclusion. Longstanding relationships with beneficiaries and partner organisations was highlighted as supporting the navigation of the covid-19 pandemic, facilitating online engagement, but importantly holding the trust needed to get people back into social spaces and interactions. The role of partnerships has been integral in building the trust necessary to meet the need of the different participants.

Another condition to efficient replication is the recourse to volunteering pathways facilitating connections and catalysing lived-experience leadership. Volunteers play an important role in facilitating connections and trust for

new community members: 'I introduce many new people into the group so that they feel connected right away' (Refugee football volunteer). Within the refugee football activities in particular, this sustained the impact of the intervention for volunteers themselves 'It gives me some great social interactions which I enjoy a lot... One of the main benefits is having more of an understanding of other people's situations' (Refugee football volunteer).

Policy impact

FURD aims to help to build a policy and legal framework based on the principles of fairness, accessibility, due process, efficiency and respect for human rights. This is an area of development within their work. Spaces of influence they are already working within:

- further education colleges: mentoring and support on educational pathways, and supporting young people to address exclusions and inequalities. Possibility of developing policy and practice guidance to support institutional change
- inclusive youth work and youth leadership development: training and development of a new generation of youth workers from diverse backgrounds, including with migration experiences to lead transformation from within
- asylum housing and accommodation: advice and support in transitions from Hotel accommodation to community-based settings, and within the 28 day move-on period (after being granted refugee status in the UK, refugees have 28 days to "move-on" from asylum support provided by Home Office to mainstream benefits and employment)
- legal advice: partnership with Sheffield Hallam University to provide legal advice and support advocacy around sibling rights within family reunification
- they are an active player within policy and practice spaces within Sheffield and the wider Yorkshire and Humber region. This includes the Children and Young People's Partnership Network, the public sector partnership work on Cohesion in Sheffield. Most recently they have influenced the Sheffield Race Equality Commission (2021), and are actively engaged in the implementation of this work. Their partnerships facilitate wider impact and influencing, including with Migration Yorkshire, the region's strategic migration partnership.

More information at

www.furd.org/refugees-asylum-seekers

Research into Football: A Shared Sense of Belonging? (2013) available at <https://furd.org/content/research>

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More information about FURD's work with refugees & asylum seekers here



Centro internazionale di quartiere (CIQ)

From 2016 onwards, the CIQ has been a place offering numerous activities to the inhabitants of its neighbourhood, the Corvetto district in Milan, Italy. Deeply multicultural and open to everyone, the CIQ understands itself as an instrument of dialogue, intercultural and intergenerational meeting and exchange. It's a place of joy and research, animated by the desire to be together to create beautiful things in synergy. Leisure activities are offered (art exhibitions, sculpture, photography, film festivals, theatre and music performances) as well as services (i.e tax assistance) and a restaurant.



Project beneficiaries are young people from 18 years old coming from Senegal and Italian citizens (all genders equally represented)



Italy,
Milan



Cariplò Foundation;
Waldensian Evangelical Church



Project run by the association Sunugal in cooperation with the Cooperativa Sociale Fate Artigiane and the help of the municipality of Milan (owner of the Cascina Casottello)

Summary

The Centro Internazionale di Quartiere (C.I.Q.) is a project of the socio-cultural association Sunugal, which has been involved in co-development between Italy and Senegal, social promotion and interculturalism for over 20 years, and the Cooperativa Sociale Fate Artigiane.

The two associations won at the beginning of 2016 the public tender for the renovation and redevelopment of the Cascina Casottello in Via Fabio Massimo 19, acquired by the City of Milan in 2013 with the aim of initiating a process of territorial and architectural regeneration.

All the activities that take place within the CIQ aim to entertain children and adults in a serene and inclusive atmosphere. On a weekly or monthly basis, courses, workshops, seminars and stages of various types (drawing, painting, modelling, etc.) are offered using various materials, standard or recycled. In addition to being a place for meeting, exchange and sharing, the CIQ also aims to provide useful services to the inhabitants of the neighborhood thus becoming a hub for all age groups.

Objectives

- to create a place of active participation, where citizens are users of services and culture, and promoters, in order to stimulate the creativity and skills of the neighborhood's inhabitants, and also meet their needs.
- to enhance intercultural interaction within the neighborhood

Management & Operation

Sunugal and Fate Artigiane ensure the management of the project and organization of activities within the space allocated (i.e. room rentals for courses or activities). Both organizations are open to collaborate with other organizations.

Results & impact

It's difficult to define exactly the number of people who take part in all the activities proposed, but it is assessed that the CIQ is a point of reference for the south-east side of Milan.

On the long term, the CIQ contributes to the improvement of migrants' integration, development of their talents and improvement of their language skills in Italian (which then makes their job market integration easier) as well as to the identification and tackling of neighborhood's residents and migrants' needs.

Lessons learned

A group of migrants was able to start an integration process within the Milan area from which also Milanese themselves benefited.

Constraints

At first, the difficulty was to bring people of different cultures and ethnicities to the CIQ, but the multicultural management of the proposed initiatives made it possible to overcome the barriers of prejudice and mistrust.

Replicability

Given the multicultural character of the initiative, it can be replicated without special arrangements. The Corvetto district is a place that lends itself to cultural exchange, due to the presence of different ethnic groups. It would be desirable to realize a similar initiative in a place where different cultures already coexist.

Policy impact

The Senegalese association's presence in Milan allows for cooperation in Senegal through bilateral exchanges with the Italian government.

Contact person

Modou Gueye

More information
about the CIQ
here:



Integrációs Szerződés (Integration Contract)*

In 2014, the Hungarian government introduced a support system for refugees and persons under subsidiary protection via the signature of an integration contract for refugees. In this framework, beneficiaries of international protection were encouraged to sign a tripartite integration contract with a local Family Support Centre and the Office of Immigration and Nationality.



Project beneficiaries are persons under international protection (refugees and persons under subsidiary protection)



Hungary



Project run by the Ministry of Home Affairs in cooperation with the Family Support Centers and the Office of Immigration and Nationality

Summary

Elements of the Integration Contract already existed in the Hungarian system before 2014, though in a scattered way. The new support system created in 2014 thought about integration as a contractual form between the Hungarian state and individuals under international protection. By formally signing their intention to make efforts regarding their integration in Hungary, persons under international protection received some basic help in the most important integration areas (housing, employment) via Family Support Centers. The shortcoming of this new system was that the FSCs were entirely unprepared for this role: they could not communicate with their beneficiaries and lacked basic knowledge and skills regarding how to integrate a foreign national who was not socialized in Hungary. During the two years of this programme, less than thousand people were formally entitled to benefit from this state integration scheme (in 2015 502 people received a refugee's status or subsidiary protection, in 2016 252). However, many of these people left the country in the first three months after receiving international protection in Hungary, thus did not benefit from this scheme on a long run. In 2015, the Integration Contract became the target of strong criticism from the state administration itself. According to the legal amendments of March 2016 submitted by Ministry of Interior to the Parliament, beneficiaries of international protection should not receive more advantages than Hungarian nationals. As a result, (cash) benefits as monthly pocket money, educational allowances and financial support for housing were stopped. Beside the above equality concerns, real or fabricated, it was clear that by 2016 the Hungarian government took a far-right political turn and was thus interested in closing down all asylum routes to Hungary and to halt all state-assisted mechanisms of integration in Hungary.

Objectives

The contract set forward personal integration targets. During a maximum of 2 years, beneficiaries were further entitled to a monthly cash allowance based on their household size. They received monthly cash allowance (in a decreasing manner spread across the two years), housing subsidy, language learning support. The scheme was however cancelled in June 2016. According to the

Integration Contract, besides the financial support, the local Family Support Centers were supposed to help the integration process of persons under international protection (refugees and persons under subsidiary protection) by identifying Hungarian language courses for them, advise and help them find affordable accommodation, and provide them with information about job opportunities.

Management & Operation

The contract was a tripartite contract between the Office of Immigration, Family Support Centers and the persons under international protection. The integration support was implemented by the Family Support Centers.

Results & impact

502 persons were entitled for the integration support in 2015, 252 in 2016. Much less people actually availed this opportunity (exact numbers not available to the public). According to the civil organizations also involved in daily integration of people under international protection, the integration support services helped those people and their families in need of initial help with housing and employment. The FSCs were however inefficient since their employees were unprepared and did not speak English, which hindered communication with beneficiaries. Some of the employees also lacked basic intercultural communication competencies and had no experience working in contact with beneficiaries under international protection or foreigners in general.

Lessons learned

The Integration Contract was not an ideal scheme and there were serious problems with its implementation, yet, its halting posed a serious challenge for many people under international protection in dire need of financial and service support in their integration journey in Hungary.

Download here the 2017 country-study on refugees' integration:



Integration Programme CZEŚĆ!

“CZEŚĆ!” (Polish for “hello”) is an integration programme launched in 2014 in the form of a series of meetings for new residents of Gdansk and its vicinity. Participants learn about life in Poland and get to know the city and other migrants with similar experiences. Thanks to the support of animators, programme participants can implement their own ideas and become active Gdańsk citizens. The programme includes inspiring meetings and discussions on diverse topics (list below), workshops, walks, study visits and Polish language practice.



Projects beneficiaries are new residents of Gdańsk



Poland, Gdańsk (Tri-City)



Europejskie Centrum Solidarności (European Solidarity Centre)



Project run by the Centrum Wsparcia Imigrantów i Imigrantek (Immigrants Support Centre) in Gdańsk & the European Solidarity Centre in cooperation with different local institutions as well as the Volunteer Centre of Gdańsk

Summary

The 2021 fall edition of the CZEŚĆ! programme was the occasion for new residents to take part in meetings covering topics such as:

- the adaptation process (“Me in the new city”)
- legal aspects of living in a new place - legalizing stay, tax law, healthcare, welfare benefits and where to find information and support (“My legal rights”)
- Polish political system, main parties and the concept of self-government; equality policies in Gdańsk (“My politics”)
- history: excursion to the Old Town in Gdańsk, learning about its history and its present; sharing stories about hometowns, creating a map of interesting places in Gdańsk (“My history”)
- differences between education system in Poland and participants’ native countries, postgraduate education, degree recognition, validation of qualifications (“My education”)
- communication in difficult situations (“My power”)
- Christmas traditions, customs and traditional Christmas recipes in Poland and other countries
- civic activism (“My opportunities”)

An important part of the “CZEŚĆ!” Programme is regular “Let’s talk” meetings, during which participants learn Polish. The project was previously called “Civic Practice Programme for Immigrants”.

Objectives

- to promote the integration of new residents through learning Polish, getting to know Polish culture, educational, political, and legal system
- to get to know the city and other people, networking
- to enhance the activity of migrants; to encourage them to create their own initiatives

As one of the co-organizer of the “CZEŚĆ!” Programme stresses during an interview held within the MIMY project: “The programme supports the independence and autonomy of migrants. The project aims to shape active new residents; support them so that they feel responsible for

themselves; so that they feel that this is their country, their city, and they can also influence their surroundings. (...) The programme is aimed at people who wanted to learn more about the city, meet people, understand the phenomenon of migration, become activists, who will create various initiatives, respond to their own needs.”

Management & Operation

Both the Immigrants Support Centre and European Solidarity Centre (ESC) ensure the project management of the “CZEŚĆ!” programme. Besides, ESC is also responsible for organizing “Let’s talk” meetings (Polish conversations). Meetings take place in ESC. The programme coordinator at ESC takes care of the involvement of other organizations and persons, provides financial documentation, keeps in touch with participants, and creates possibilities and places for networking and realization of participants’ initiatives. Besides, the Immigrants Support Centre provides information on legal rights and Polish courses for participants while volunteers from the Volunteer Centre of Gdańsk help overcome language issues faced by participants during meetings.

Registration for the programme takes place twice a year (August/September & February/March). The participation is free of cost and places are limited.

Results & impact

So far 30 people took part in each edition, coming from the following countries: Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, USA, Belgium, Australia, France, Italy, Spain, Hungary and Syria.

Some of the participants got involved in socio-cultural activities, e.g. joining the Immigrant Council in Gdańsk that advises the mayor and other local authorities on migrant and refugee integration related issues and policies.

Other participants also organized a film discussion club, an art photo project and an exhibition, started volunteering in cultural institutions etc.



Monitoring, evaluation & validation

An evaluation is carried out after each edition of the programme. Participants are interviewed and this feedback helps the organization with the analysis of “real” effects of the programme. The impact of the project on participants’ social contacts/network (i.e. did participants meet each other out of the programme?), participants’ feelings towards the Polish language were for instance directly alluded to in order to monitor these effects.

Participants are also asked for their ideas regarding social activities or topics they would like to be tackled. Evaluation results are then used to plan the next editions of the project.

Lessons learned

Offers and conditions need to be accurately adjusted to participants’ needs as well as to their possibilities. Participants’ wellbeing should be taken into account at all stages. Giving thought to what comes after the programme is essential, in order to provide a long-lasting support.

Constraints

In the context of the Covid19 pandemic, it was challenging for organizers to offer an online version of the “CZEŚĆ!” programme since beneficiaries were exhausted of online meetings. The diversity of participants in terms of expectations regarding the programme and especially the meeting also adds to this challenge.

Replicability

To ensure a successful implementation of this programme, cooperation with other organizations already working with immigrants is key in order to better identify individual participants needs in this region and in this situation. Immigrants should be actively involved when creating the programme; they should be given possibilities of self-organization and their ideas should be supported. Anticipating what could come after the programme is essential in order to provide a long-lasting support. A certain amount of flexibility is needed as well as the willingness to learn from each other.

More information at

<https://www.ecs.gda.pl/czesc>
<https://ecs.gda.pl/title,pid,2412.html>
<https://cwii.pl/jak-wspieramy/program-integracyjny-dla-nowych-mieszkanow-czesc/>

Contact

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The project supports the independence and autonomy of migrants. It aims to shape active new residents; support them so that they feel responsible for themselves; so that they feel that this is their country, their city, and they can also influence their surroundings.



Learn more about the programme here



Mentoring Programme

Since November 2017, RYSE a.s.b.l. organizes one-to-one matches between Luxembourgish citizens and refugees/asylum seekers aged 18-35. Mentors and mentees are paired based on similar interests and backgrounds to ensure a smooth fit. This mentoring programme offers tailored, individual support to help mentees integrate and work towards achieving their goals and ambitions. RYSE a.s.b.l. provides practical assistance to all its mentors including information on useful services for mentees as well as tailored training sessions to provide them with the right tools for a successful mentoring experience.



Projects beneficiaries are refugees and asylum seekers aged 18-35 (all genders)



Luxembourg city, Luxembourg



OEUVRE – Andre Losch Foundation – Private donations



Project run by RYSE a.s.b.l. with the cooperation of volunteers from the civil society

Objectives

- to promote beneficiaries' empowerment
- to improve social and cultural integration
- to facilitate beneficiaries' access to the job market

Management & Operation

The RYSE team meets potential mentors and mentees individually. The needs and ambitions of the mentees are evaluated as well as the background and motivation of the mentors. Based on a range of criteria, one-to-one matches are created with the purpose for the match of meeting on a weekly basis and work together to help the mentees integrate and settle down. The RYSE team remains present in the matches with regular follow-up and training sessions offered to mentors and mentees. Regular monthly checks and feedback session with mentors and mentees according to situation and needs (Feedback forms, face-to-face meetings and follow up calls). A various range of indicators (i.e. frequency of the meetings, achievement, problem solving abilities, personal feeling about the experience, cultural and social impact) is used to ensure an efficient evaluation process.

Results & impact

Over 200 mentees (40% female and 60% male) and over 150 volunteer mentors have participated in the project since its creation.

Being supported by a resident throughout the integration process enables beneficiaries to (among others) improve their language skills, get to know the local culture, find jobs, access further study options, find an accommodation, solve administrative issues.

Main findings

Most mentees need minimum 3 years to settle down. Mentors and volunteers are crucial intermediaries between refugees and host society. Local networking is key and direct interactions between locals and refugees facilitate the integration process. Locals and citizens in general are not aware of the integration challenges & obstacles faced by refugees.

Lessons learned

Integration is much easier with the support of the residents. Racism is still very present in Luxembourg and involving the host society is key to successful integration. Refugees in general don't want to depend on financial aid but they often have no other choice. Integration into the job market is the main step towards autonomy and gives them the opportunity to start a new life.

Discover the mentoring's story of El Mowafak & Candi [here](#)





Replicability

Creating individual matches between resident and refugees should be doable in every European country. The main resources needed are those allocated to the project team which is vital in order to set the rules and criteria and run the project properly with regular follow-up and monitoring actions.

Indicators developed during this project in order to evaluate individual achievements encompass the following: gender, age, language proficiency, legal status, level of education, work experience, skills developed, housing situation, family situation etc.

To ensure the success of the project, it is important to maintain a tailored approach as well as an open dialogue and interaction with other services dedicated to that same population. Regular exchanges with public institutions are also important.

Constraints

Despite the quick success of the project (due to the tailored and very concrete approach adopted), the discrepancy between the high demand coming from the beneficiaries and the limited financial resources constituted an obstacle for RYSE. This prevented the NGO to support more beneficiaries.

To counter this, RYSE is constantly looking for funding opportunities both state funding and private sponsorships. Besides, administrative constraints prevent beneficiaries from becoming active straight after their arrival. The procedures are lengthy and the psychological impact intense.

It remains very difficult for refugees to access the job market as well as private housing in Luxembourg. RYSE raises awareness about these specific issues faced by beneficiaries among its network as well as among the Luxembourgish residents. The non-profit also installs a dialogue with public services and acts through various platforms at political level.

More information at

<https://en.ryseluxembourg.com/>

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One example of awareness-raising work made by RYSE in local media



Being supported by a resident throughout the integration process enables beneficiaries to (among others) improve their language skills, get to know the local culture, find jobs, access further study options, find an accommodation, solve administrative issues.



Mötesplats Otto

From 2013 onwards, the Association of Unaccompanied Minors has been running Mötesplats Otto (Swedish for "meeting place Otto") at Värnhem in Malmö, which is aimed at newly arrived children and young people up to the age of 30. Mötesplats Otto is a meeting place open to everyone where homework as well as social and legal help, sports and leisure activities are offered. Activities also entail lectures and workshops on youth-relevant topics such as health & sexual health or drug prevention. Mötesplats Otto aims at breaking loneliness and at offering a space for new friendships to be formed.



Projects beneficiaries are newly arrived children & young people up to 30 years old (all genders)



Sweden,
Malmö & 15 other municipalities



ABF Malmö, Fritidsförvaltningen & ASF, City of Malmö, National Agency for Education. Membership fee of 50 sek (approx. 5 Euros/year)



Project run by Ensamkommandes förbund (Association of unaccompanied minors). Important collaborations with the city of Malmö & different civil society organizations

Objectives

- to promote the target group's establishment in Swedish society
- to promote the target group cultural and social interests
- to spread information about Swedish society and association life
- to engage in sporting, artistic, scientific, educational, cultural and social activities
- to make contacts with other associations that have a similar agenda
- to arrange meetings between current organizations/ individuals and association members where both knowledge and experience and societal interests are intertwined in pleasant ways

Management & Operation

The Board of directors of Ensamkommandes förbund (association created by former unaccompanied minors) is exclusively composed of unaccompanied youngsters. There is 1 chairman and 2 operation managers. The association is not affiliated to any religion.

Results & impact

- 27 different activities organized weekly for unaccompanied minors
- 15 different municipalities involved all over Sweden
- 3000 members

The Association has been an important support for unaccompanied migrants since its start and has managed to raise issues important to the group on the societal and policy agenda.

Replicability

The self-organizing of unaccompanied migrants through this association is a great example of migrant youth taking control of their situation and making possible for themselves to talk with their own voice instead of having others representing them.

Policy impact

They have been acknowledged as an important actor representing the interests of unaccompanied migrants in Sweden.

More information at

<https://bit.ly/3X5WcPo>

<https://ensamkommandesforbund.se/motesplats-otto/>

Learn more about
Mötesplats Otto here



My Place

The "My Place" project supports the integration process of beneficiaries of international protection and third-country nationals legally residing in Romania Southeast Region. Through this project, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Romania provides a wide range of complementary services to those offered by the state, such as: legal, medical, psychological, employment counseling, material assistance, as well as social, cultural, recreational or educational activities. Romanian language courses are also offered. My Place was preceded by similar projects implemented in Bucharest and in Southeast of Romania.



Projects beneficiaries are beneficiaries of international protection and third-country nationals with legal stay in the country, as well as local communities (all genders & ages)



Romania, Southeast Region, counties Galați, Constanța, Vrancea, Bacău, Vaslui, Brăila, Tulcea



Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (European Commission)



Project run by Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Romania, in cooperation with Asociația Ecumenică a Bisericilor din România, Asociația Filantropia Oradea, Asociația Novapolis

Objectives

- to create the necessary infrastructure to carry out the activities intended for beneficiaries
- to improve the visibility of the benefits of integration measures and the interaction between the host society and the target group
- to develop communication with local actors involved in the integration process and an active involvement of local communities in integration activities
- to maximize the chances of integration among beneficiaries through information, counseling and assistance in accessing available public services, through training and involvement in educational, cultural activities, etc.
- to support beneficiaries in the integration process by providing complementary material assistance, especially to vulnerable people or people with special needs
- to increase the integration rate among beneficiaries through coordination and cooperation actions with various relevant actors in the field of integration

- at least 35 informed, advised and legally assisted persons, financial incentives, medical assistance
- at least 30 children received material support for educational materials

A special emphasis was put on the integration programme carried out with the support of the law authorities and on the organization of Romanian language modules, being made over 35 modules on various levels of training in which more than 150 participants took part.

Lessons learned

My Place highlighted the role of the interactions between locals and foreigners. Links between local institutions and migrant communities were strengthened, and through the involvement of cultural mediators, interpreters and volunteers, local support networks have been developed. At least 30% of project beneficiaries are children, and therefore special attention is given to support with school enrolment, course advice, parent-teacher mediation, and individual after school activities.

Management & Operation

The project activities were implemented by a consortium of organizations led by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Romania. Two Regional Integration Centres (Galați and Constanța) provide the venue for the activities. The team has a regular presence in the Reception Centre of Galati, and provides residents with counselling, advice, and services at the local integration centre.

Besides regular monitoring visits paid by the project manager to project sites, a thorough self-evaluation process involving project beneficiaries, partners and staff took place.

Replicability

This project was continued in the same area with the project My Place to Integration (see next page).

More information at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZC91bi1z574>

Retrieved from the project's website on July 1st, 2022.

Results & impact

- at least 200 participants in socio-cultural and recreational activities
- at least 30 modules of Romanian language and cultural accommodation

My Place to Integration

"My Place to Integration" is the continuation of the "My Place" project (see page 48). From the perspective of innovative and value-added activities, "My Place to Integration" introduced distance counseling/assistance for certain categories of beneficiaries (online courses, etc.). A trilingual online employment platform has also been developed and is regularly updated by local employment agencies. This allows beneficiaries to seek employment without having to queue for an appointment at the doors of employment agencies. "My Place to Integration" also continues trying to involve cultural mediators, performers and volunteers at the local level as well as to develop local support networks (at the level of institutions and organizations that come into contact with migrants or within their communities).



Projects beneficiaries are beneficiaries of international protection, third-country nationals with legal stay in the country & local communities (all genders & ages)



Romania, Southeast Region, including the counties Galați, Constanța, Vrancea, Bacău, Vaslui, Brăila, Tulcea



Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (European Commission)



Project run by Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Romania, in cooperation with the Foundation Inima de copil (for dissemination & children related activities).

Objectives

- to improve beneficiaries' skills in Romanian
- to offer them cultural, educational and recreational activities
- to facilitate their labour market integration through the use of the employment platform
- to develop partnerships between JRS Romania and the relevant stakeholders to facilitate migrants' referral to different institutions
- to establish - alongside relevant local stakeholders - support teams at the prefecture level in the project area
- to organize local, small-scale public awareness campaigns, to facilitate and improve interactions between locals and migrants

Management & Operation

The project activities were implemented by a consortium of organizations led by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Romania. Two Regional Integration Centres (Galați and Constanța) provide the venue for the activities. The team has a regular presence in the Reception Centre of Galați, and provides residents with counselling, advice, and services at the local integration centre.

Besides regular monitoring visits paid by the project manager to project sites, a thorough self-evaluation process involving project beneficiaries, partners and staff took place at the end of the project's first year. Internal analysis is conducted using a complex database specifically tailored for supervision of project activities. The project also sees annually several 'mission controls' conducted by the funder, as well as one audit and final approval of activities by relevant authorities in order to approve its next stages. In 2021, the Court of Accounts conducted an external audit of the overall project activities.

Results & impact

- 723 third country nationals have been assisted since 2020, including 202 children
- 115 beneficiaries of international protection have been supported during the governmental integration programme
- 600 participants in the Romanian language and culture classes and cultural/leisure activities
- 70 modules of Romanian language and cultural accommodation as well as information, counselling, material, legal, medical, psychological assistance at the level of the two regional integration centers in the cities of Galați & Constanța

In some cases, the project beneficiaries' livelihoods have been significantly improved at financial level, while for others the chances for an easier integration increased.

Lessons learned

The assistance provided by the national integration programme in Romania does not sufficiently meet the complex needs of beneficiaries of international protection and other foreigners with legal stay in the country. Further, many migrant individuals are either excluded from or cannot access this integration programme. Those living in remote communities or rural areas are difficult to spot, for example, and often find themselves in particularly vulnerable or isolated circumstances without means of support.

A centre that combines diverse services, provides a safe environment and offers opportunities for social interaction for those in need of support was thought to



be easier to access than a series of services available in different places, so this is what the My Place project provides. Mobile teams - including informal community leaders and cultural mediators - were additionally deployed in the field to identify and assist those in need of integration support in remote communities.

Replicability

My Place is an example of good practice, being a concept developed in several projects implemented by JRS Romania from various sources of grants. There are clear possibilities for extending this practice more widely in other regions of Romania hosting refugees.

Such a multifunctional center could be developed in other parts of Romania, i.e. in the county of Iasi, where refugees' need to interact and have access to information on integration opportunities are not met.

More information at

<https://refugeejobs.ro/?lang=ro>
[My Place to Integration \(jrsromania.org\)](http://My Place to Integration (jrsromania.org))

Contact person

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Retrieved from the project's website on July 1st, 2022.

Discover here the trilingual employment platform



The assistance provided by the national integration programme in Romania does not sufficiently meet the complex needs of beneficiaries of international protection and other foreigners with legal stay in the country.

Further, many migrant individuals are either excluded from or cannot access this integration programme. Those living in remote communities or rural areas are difficult to spot, for example, and often find themselves in particularly vulnerable or isolated circumstances without means of support.



Papillon

Papillon is an organization that empowers young people (most of the current beneficiaries are young women) from diverse backgrounds and help them standing in their own choices and see their stories as their power. Papillon offers, among other things, a meeting place, networking and guidance. Papillon creates bridges between people from different cultures, public actors and employers. It contributes to social inclusion, thus favoring positive community experiences and enhancing participants' feeling of belonging.



Project beneficiaries are mainly young people aged 15 to 30 and especially young women (but young men can also take part)



Bergen municipality, Vestland county municipality, private actors (i.e. Sparebanken Vest)



Norway,
Bergen



Project run in cooperation with local associations, cooperatives, public services and cultural services

Summary

Papillon offers beneficiaries a wide range of activities and services, among others:

- Mandagstreff (Norwegian for "Monday meetings"): low-threshold weekly meeting. Beneficiaries meet either in person or online (depending on the Covid situation) with skilled volunteers and can practice Norwegian, get advice and guidance with job hunting or schoolwork.
- Individual guidance to offers a space where young people can address sensible topics or express needs, raise questions that are not suitable to address in groups.
- Artistic activities: singing, songwriting, poetry writing, contemporary dance (partnership with Norway's national company for contemporary dance).
- Weledo: 11-weeks programme created in 2019 to strengthen, train and support young people who have relatively recently moved to Norway, to more easily navigate the Norwegian system. Following topics are addressed: employment law, tenancy law, budgeting, savings, mental and sexual health, child protection, etc. A small group of 6-8 participants meets at Papillon's office one evening/week. A professional guest contributes every week (from among others, the Economic Median, the Jussmedian and the Sanitetsforeningen). The knowledge conveyed and the experiences shared strengthen participants' awareness on their duties and opportunities within the Norwegian society, in a language that they master themselves. Weledo was paused in 2022. It is not sure that the project will start again and when.
- Eg e' Meg: since 2019, Papillon established a close collaboration with secondary schools and upper secondary schools, which allows the organization to offer reflective activities to students. The activities help strengthening young people's skills, social competence and critical thinking and lead to reflections on identity, migration and belonging. Conversations addressing heavier topics (making one's own choices, negative social control and coercion, gender, sexual health, orientation and contraception) also take place. Due to the sensitivity of the issues and topics addressed, conversations take place in non-mixed groups.

- Anonymous chat service: young people and young adults can be exposed to pressure, high expectations and negative social control from their family and their surroundings. For these young people, it can be difficult to seek help. In collaboration with Kolbrun Retorikk, Papillon launched in 2019 a safe and anonymous chat service to guide young people who are having a hard time and/or need advice.

Objectives

- to promote intercultural learning
- to develop language competence
- to provide a better access to the work market
- to foster social and cultural integration
- to offer individual guidance
- to promote diversity, mutual understanding, cultural acceptance

Management & Operation

Papillon works in close cooperation with the municipality of Bergen and Vestland county. The NGO reaches the target group through several channels, among other things they are active at Nygård school, which is an introductory school in Bergen. Papillon also has direct contact with health services. The NGO's office is located within the health center in central Bergen, which is used by young people, students and young people starting a family. Many young people visit the health center to get advice when difficult situations at home or in their group of friends arise, while others to get contraceptives. This location makes it both easy for young migrants and for Papillon to meet.

The organization received very good feedback from both participants and partners in the municipality and won various awards in recent years (including Plan International Girl Award in 2019), and therefore has gained visibility in Bergen. This positive feedback also came out during interviews led within the MIMY project, revealing that both former and current participants are very satisfied with the organisation. They particularly highlight the emotional aspect which they feel the municipality is unable to cover



and also stress that the employees at Papillon are not just programme leaders or an intermediary between them and the municipality, employer etc. Papillon's employees become their friends and are described as some of the most important people in their lives who live in Norway. Having said that, participants interviewed also emphasize that Papillon should be extended to other municipalities and other parts of Norway.

Results & impact

In 2021:

- 270 students reached through school projects
- 740 guidance agreements signed
- 50 participants in cultural springboard projects
- 30 participants took part in summer schools
- 390 participants during Monday meetings
- 210 participants in "Weledo" course programme
- 3,000 lectures, where approx. half included students
- informational videos about the coronavirus and the corona vaccine, in many different languages. These were shared on the municipality's website, and together over 200,000 people watched these videos by December 2021

By fostering networks, increasing understanding, representing diversity, forming meeting groups and facilitating access to employment, Papillon has contributed to a positive development when it comes to social and financial conditions of its members. Papillon has in many ways made its members and users more resilient, by strengthening their skills and teaching them new ones, as well as providing to a safe, secure, and helpful meeting place.

Lessons learned

Negative social control and other challenges faced by multicultural young people in the Norwegian society can be improved by increasing understanding for all young people through education. Organisations like Papillon are necessary since they provide a bridge between institutions and individuals at the micro/local level. Coming to Norway can constitute a vulnerable phase in young peoples' lives, where they have a lot to deal with. There is a real need for a community where newly arrived migrants can get answers to questions that are otherwise difficult to ask or understand (this is especially what the Weledo programme tries to offer).

Constraints

Papillon is unable to meet all the needs of participants due to the limited premises of the organization. For instance, the organisation would like to provide participants with a space where they could just "drop in" when needed. The organization also faced financing limitations for various projects preventing it to hire human resources. This issue was solved by seeking public funds for various projects.

Replicability

Papillon provides migrants in Bergen with many services, making a real difference in their lives. Whether it is achievable for Papillon to expand to other cities is also difficult to say. Here, further financial support will probably have a big impact.

More information at

<https://bit.ly/3H6OyyO>

<https://bit.ly/3iBd3K4>

<https://www.plan-norge.no/jentepriisen/2019>

Contact persons

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(...) employees at Papillon are not just programme leaders or an intermediary between them [beneficiaries] and the municipality, employer, etc. They become their friends and are described as some of the most important people in their lives who live in Norway.



Browse Papillon's website to discover more about the activities offered



Awareness-raising & Advocacy

For two years (2011-2013), the five cities of Berlin (Germany), Botkyrka (Sweden), Graz (Austria), Madrid (Spain) and Växjö (Sweden) cooperated within the ECAR (European Cities Against Racism) transnational project in order to develop policy recommendations, implement measures against racism at local level, and discuss their transferability for the benefit of local actors across EU.



Projects beneficiaries are stakeholders active in NGOs and administration services, vulnerable groups (potential victims of racist discrimination), population at large



Germany, Berlin; Austria, Graz; Spain, Madrid; Sweden, Botkyrka & Växjö



Civil Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme (European Commission, DG Justice)



Project coordinated by the city of Berlin and run in cooperation with the 4 others cities administrations together with other organizations operating at the local level

Summary

Five diverse, innovative local approaches and sustainable solutions on combating racism and xenophobia were selected to serve as test areas in order to develop and discuss innovative, attractive, effective and sustainable good practice. These can be easily adapted and applied. These approaches fill in a gap and supply cities with solutions for implementing sustainable anti-racism strategies, derived from profound experience. Here is a short overview of the five approaches, along with their relevance to the Ten-Point-Plan of Action:

- “Local Action Plans Against Racism” (BGZ/LADS)
- “Intercultural Research Circles” (Municipality of Botkyrka/Växjö Municipal Office/Multicultural Centre)
- “Fighting racism and xenophobia within the community development programme in public spaces” (Madrid City Council/CEAR)
- “Empowerment” (BGZ/LADS)
- “Effective awareness raising of the public” (Graz City Council/ETC Graz)

The member cities of the ECAR agreed on implementing a Ten-Point-Plan of Action (10PPA) to support the fight against racism and discrimination help them to set priorities, optimize their strategies and intensify their co-operation:

1. Greater Vigilance Against Racism
2. Assessing Racism and Discrimination and Monitoring Municipal Policies
3. Better Support for the Victims of Racism, Discrimination
4. More Participation and Better-Informed City Dwellers
5. The City as an Active Supporter of Equal Opportunity Practices
6. The City as an Equal Opportunities Employer and Service Provider
7. Fair Access to Housing
8. Challenging Racism and Discrimination through Education
9. Promoting Cultural Diversity
10. Hate Crimes and Conflicts Management

Stakeholders & policymakers involved

- Berlin, Germany: Berlin State Office for Equal Treatment and against Discrimination (LADS) and Berlin International Cooperation Agency (BGZ)
- Graz, Austria: Graz City Council; European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
- Madrid, Spain: Madrid City Council; Spanish Commission for Refugees
- Botkyrka/Växjö, Sweden: Municipality of Botkyrka; Växjö Municipality; The Multicultural Centre

Objectives

The overall goal of the project is to improve impact and sustainability of local strategies and actions combating racism and xenophobia – through development, exchange and transfer of innovative good practice approaches and a scheme for monitoring for the benefit of local actors across EU.

The ECAR project followed the objectives below:

- to increase awareness both of citizens and of stakeholders towards tolerance and non-discriminatory behaviour and their responsibilities in combating discrimination
- to empower vulnerable groups of the population, who due to their ethnic origin or skin colour suffer from discrimination
- to support exchange and cooperation among stakeholders of different European cities
- to develop a monitoring scheme to measure the success of measures and approaches to combat racism
- to draw conclusions and give recommendations for further activities against racism
- to inform the general public about local and international activities of cities against racism



Management & Operation

5 cities cooperated for two years, with Germany being the coordinator. Each city has developed a certain project against racism and exchanged experiences to develop sustainable solutions.

Results & impact

The following resources were published:

- situation analysis with findings and conclusions on the situation per country (English summaries of the analysis are available)
- Good Practice brochures and policy paper with conclusions and recommendations
- monitoring scheme and guideline

Besides, a transnational conference (project's final event) was organized, bringing together the main actors to exchange and disseminate good practices for antiracism work.

On the long term, monitoring racism and discrimination on the local level contribute to:

- evaluate the impact of a particular measure against racism and discrimination on the local level. An objective monitoring may help to evaluate in quantitative and/or qualitative terms the effectiveness of a particular measure against racism and discrimination and thus provide policy makers with unbiased feedback regarding their actions taken in the past. As the fight against racist discrimination is usually regarded as a long-term endeavour, the evaluation of the impact of a particular policy measure may help identify the progress made at different points in time. Such assessments allow keeping track of improvements or regressions regarding racist discriminations.
- raise awareness regarding data gaps. Monitoring racist discrimination requires the collection of a wide range of highly specific data. It is a common phenomenon in practice that important data cannot be collected, simply because they are not available or usable for the specific requirements of a monitoring scheme on racist discrimination. Monitoring may help to raise awareness of such data gaps and could stimulate initiatives to close those gaps.
- stimulate communication and establish partnerships between administration and researchers. Monitoring racist discrimination on the local level usually requires the collaboration of researchers and staff of the municipality's administration. The joint development and application of adequate indicators may stimulate the communication between them and may help to develop a joint understanding of the overall criteria for progress and success in the fight against racist discrimination.

Reference:

Möstl, M.; Stocker, A.; Starl, K. (2013). ECAR Monitoring Manual. Download from ECAR / BGZ (bgz-berlin.de)

Monitoring, Evaluation & Validation

An indicator-based monitoring scheme has been set up in a joint cooperation led by ETC Graz, which enables the evaluation of the implementation of measures and strategies against racism.

Data was collected to assess racism in the public space, and the process of implementation was evaluated by a range of 60 different indicators. Project Evaluation has been done by European Commission, DG Justice.

Several steps have been taken to further delineate the term 'racist discrimination'. In line with Article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, racist discrimination was generally understood as 'any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life'. Based on this definition, three aspects that were regarded to be of particular importance for measuring this phenomenon within the public space of municipalities have been specified. A differentiation was made between:

- Aspects of racist discrimination of Black persons, Muslims, and/or Roma in the public space in municipalities
- Aspects of measures against racist discrimination of Black persons, Muslims, and/or Roma in the public space in municipalities
- Aspects of the long-term progress in eliminating racism and discrimination in the public space

RIX-indicators

Many people, as well as communities and social groups, experience and suffer from racism and discrimination in their daily lives. RIX-indicators are designed to measure the current situation of racist discrimination for each 'racialized' target group at a particular point in time. Yet, as racism and discrimination are multi-faceted phenomena relevant domains have to be defined, which should be gauged by the monitoring scheme. In the ECAR project, the crucial question for defining RIX-indicators was: What challenges exist regarding racism and discrimination against the defined target groups in the public space of the project's municipalities? A focus was put on identifying main discriminations in the access to, the use of and the enjoyment of the public space.

IMPLIX-indicators

Municipalities may undertake various policy measures against racist discrimination. IMPLIX indicators aim to gauge the performance of such measures in an objective manner. In the ECAR project, the crucial questions for defining IMPLIX indicators were: Is the policy measure taken by the municipality a response to actual and current challenges? Is the measure appropriate to target the identified challenge of racism and discrimination? Are the



formulated measures likely to be effective? Have the planned measures been taken and have the goals of implementation been met?

IMPACTIX-indicators

Ideally, policy measures against racist discrimination bring about a positive change with regard to a particular challenge identified beforehand. IMPACTIX indicators measure the extent to which policy measures successfully respond to the needs of individuals, communities, and societies and thus brought about changes in terms of improved conditions for individuals and population groups at risk being discriminated against. In the ECAR project, the crucial questions for defining IMPACTIX-indicators were: Has the overall purpose of the policy measure taken by the municipality been supported? Was the implemented policy successful in terms of its stated objectives, namely establishing improved conditions for individuals and population groups at risk being discriminated? Was the policy adequate and effective? How do members of the target group(s) perceive the impact?

Lessons learned

Participatory approaches should be used in each stage of the anti-racist measures in the design, the development, the implementation and evaluation of the anti-racist approaches. The active involvement of important stakeholders, particularly groups who are primarily affected by racism, should be ensured.

Sufficient financial and personnel resources should be allocated for anti-racist work. Top-down as well as bottom-up processes should be initiated.

Anti-racist work appears to constitute a central part of a vital democracy. As key actors, public administrations need to be addressed. Good practice examples for anti-racist measures are needed. Approaches to fight racism should be adapted to the local situation and sustainable anti-racist measures should have a long-term perspective. Monitoring is also a necessary tool to achieve sustainability.

There are significant data gaps and indicator results have limited comparability

Replicability

The Good Practice overviews provided by ECAR are made up of five approaches for fighting racism in different fields, which can be adapted and applied accordingly. These approaches might fill in a gap and supply cities with solutions for implementing sustainable anti-racism strategies, derived from profound experience.

More information at

<https://bit.ly/3hFuRUa>

Download ECAR's Monitoring Manual here

<https://bit.ly/3E32lDv>

Download the brochure "Good Practice Approaches - Ways to Combat Racism in your City" here <https://bit.ly/3EuQUpk>

Contact persons

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Participatory approaches should be used in each stage of the anti-racist measures in the design, the development, the implementation and evaluation of the anti-racist approaches. The active involvement of important stakeholders, particularly groups who are primarily affected by racism, should be ensured.



Watch here anti-racist video spots created within the project and download ECAR's publications



Cooperation between refugee shelter & local authorities

In 2016, a refugee shelter opened its doors in a small city in the South of Luxembourg. At the same time, the local authorities of the city decided to create a position dedicated to the coordination of projects supporting the integration of the future shelters' inhabitants. This led to an enhanced cooperation between the local authorities, the Luxembourg Red Cross (responsible for the refugee shelter) as well as other local partners working with and for the shelter's inhabitants. As a consequence, a wide range of activities directed at the shelters' inhabitants as well as other inhabitants of the city were successfully organized (open day at the shelter, community garden, literacy courses, various French courses, guided bus tour of the city, etc).



Projects beneficiaries are residents of the refugee shelter (among them many young people), inhabitants of Dudelange of all ages and genders



Luxembourg,
Dudelange



City of Dudelange, Luxembourg Red Cross,
National Office for Integration (ONA)



Project run by the equal opportunities service of the City of Dudelange and the Luxembourg Red Cross in cooperation with the Luxembourg Reception and Integration Agency and other local partners

Summary

A wide range of projects was organized after the hiring of the coordinator within the equal opportunities service of the city. These projects were implemented in cooperation with local NGOs and involved both shelters' inhabitants and inhabitants of the other districts of Dudelange:

- "asylum and adaptation" project with the NGO Alter Ego (weekly artistic mediation workshops to help shelter's inhabitants adapt in better conditions to their social, cultural, economic and political realities in Luxembourg and thus lay the psychosocial foundations for their integration.
- balanced breakfast project with the school medical service in the shelter & dental hygiene sessions with a dentist
- internal communal football tournament, Basketball tournament with the Basketball Academy
- project on children's education with Eltereschool (lux. for school for parents), registration of young people in the scouts
- stall at Summer Spill a Spaass, Festival of Cultures, World Market (sale of dishes made during cooking workshops), cooking project with Soroptimist, touristic outings, participation in the local newspaper
- administrative workshops with local staff of administrative services

Besides, the communal coordination played an important role in providing tailored support to several groups of people:

- asylum seekers and shelter's employees received information on the commune's offers; they were put in contact with volunteers, associations and the local population. Needs and interests of asylum seekers were identified, training and coaching opportunities were offered, and material donations organized.

- the coordination also brought together different stakeholders, which helped them coordinate together projects. Besides, the communal coordination also assisted these projects with the implementation on the local level.
- it also provides the general public with information regarding asylum seekers and refugees and serves as contact point in case questions occur.
- volunteers were offered trainings (4 local training cycles, newsletter), networking opportunities, coaching (discussion groups, individual consultations)
- the employees working for the city are also offered training opportunities and workshops.

Objectives

- to support the integration process of shelter's inhabitants based on their needs and interests: support personal development; promotion of motivation for personal development and growth; promotion of self-efficacy
- to support the integration in the local context: discovering and getting to know the host country, its values, functioning, procedures; offering orientation to local services and offers
- to support the integration as equals: promotion of intercultural dialogue and exchange; contribution to social cohesion; promotion of direct contact between the local population and the newcomers; building personal networks in the local context; providing information about everyday life from peers

Management & Operation

A position was created within the Equal Opportunities Department of the city to coordinate the projects on the communal level.



Many projects have been set up for the residents of the shelter, but also so that they are better received by the population and local partners. Residents can take part in the different events offered by the municipality (accompaniment by the social team, free of charge). A Steering Committee was created to monitor and discuss the themes on a monthly basis in 2016, then 2-3 times a year. The Monitoring Committee still takes place today.

Regular meetings between the Equal Opportunities Department and the Luxembourg Red Cross take place to set up projects according to identified needs. Some projects have been redone with an adaptation to the change of population in the home and according to the dynamics.

Results & impact

- volunteering: 120 responses in November 2015 (sponsorship, donations, volunteering), 40 active volunteers over 4 years, 20 still active - discussion groups, meetings, individual interviews are organized to accompany volunteers
- 130 persons took part in local training sessions (among them 4 associations during 4 editions)

On the long term, this sustainable cooperation between the commune's coordination and the Luxembourgish Red Cross as well as the variety of projects organized contribute to:

- develop the attractiveness of Dudelange for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection but also for partners
- develop the attachment to the host country (the residents of the shelter wish to settle in Dudelange)
- create network and connections, intercultural friendships
- improve the perception of the population on refugees & fight stereotypes
- improve the reception of refugees within local services and administrations
- improve the collaboration between the Red Cross and other local associations

Lessons learned

To have a contact person active in the social field at the local level of the commune is a great asset in deconstructing prejudices among the local population, and particularly among the staff of the commune.

Constraints

Financial constraints appeared especially after the municipality stopped allocating money in 2019. It is important to dedicate a full paid position to this cooperation. Refugees' privacy (the shelter is their home and, in that sense, not a place of leisure) as well as image (forbidden to take and share without authorizations) should always be respected.

Replicability

Establishing a cooperation with the local authorities (and their different services) is essential to facilitate the integration of refugees.

Policy impact

Luxembourg Red Cross is politically neutral. Awareness has been raised among local representatives. Overall, this cooperation helps preventing discrimination.

More information at

About the trainings provided to volunteers:

<https://bit.ly/3X7TpFl>

The initiative has also been relayed by local traditional and social media:

<https://bit.ly/3Odavxu>

<https://bit.ly/3OpYvsZ>



To set up a cooperation with local authorities (and their different services) is essential for refugees' integration.



More information about the trainings offered to staff in direct contact with beneficiaries of international protection here:



Improving migrants' & minorities situation on the housing market*

Between 1997 and 2008, the non-profit agency Planerladen e.V. has been contracted by the regional Ministry for Generations, Family, Women and Integration to work on the improvement of the situations of migrants and ethnic minorities in the housing market in Dortmund. It provided analysis and documentation of discrimination of migrants in the housing sector, promoted intercultural exchange and dialogue and developed exemplary measures to combat discrimination of migrants in the housing sector.



Project beneficiaries are migrants and ethnic minority residents of Dortmund and its region



Ministry for Generations, Family, Women and Integration of Nord Rhine Westfalia



Germany, Dortmund



Project run by the Planerladen e.V.

Summary

The project aimed at increasing the number of residential options available for migrants in the local housing market by tracing and tackling the problem of discrimination in the housing sector and raising the public awareness for it. Within this context, the project served to analyze the situation of migrants on the local and regional housing market, to develop and to test measures against housing discrimination (e.g. by offering information and counselling for renters).

Furthermore, the project helped to foster the presence of the topic of discrimination in the housing sector within discourses in the local, regional and supra-regional political and market arena (e.g. through statements, scientific papers and workshops).

In a second phase of the project, from 2000 onward, the improvement of local housing options and a better access to housing property for migrants have been added as goals of the project.

Objectives

- to increase the housing possibilities for migrants in Dortmund
- to raise public awareness regarding discrimination in housing sector
- to analyse the current situation of the labour market

Management & Operation

Paired-ethnic testing in the housing market were organized (tests with pairs of people with different ethnic origin -otherwise identical- applying for a rental flat) in order to proof that landlords make significant differences between e.g. Germans and Turks. Housing suppliers were interviewed and asked about their practices towards migrants (quotas etc.).

Qualitative empirical inquiries were led to reveal the practice of housing associations to select renters and steer them into certain parts of their housing stock on the basis of ethnicity or nationality. Awareness-raising measures against discrimination in local housing markets were also organized (e.g. email-signature-

campaign and poster-campaign against discrimination) and position papers on the situation of migrants in the local housing market were published. The results of the testings prove the success of the initiative. Besides, the project has been reviewed and evaluated by the Ministry.

Results & impact

The maximum quota for non-German population in the local social housing sector was abandoned in 2000. The political discourse on the neighbourhood "Nordstadt" has been de-ethnicized. The process of developing master plans for the integration of migrants in several cities has been accompanied. The brief description found in the database states the positive impact that might eliminate discrimination in the long run. The presence of the topic was especially increased with organized workshops, published statements and report and the positive impact of the project on the long run for the elimination of discrimination was stressed. On the other hand, the empirical work done during the MIMY project revealed that discrimination in the housing market is still a very dominant incident that migrants experience in Dortmund by 2022. Although there are measures and programmes initiated through various non-state actors, it is still challenging for migrants to access to housing market. The long-term impact of the project should therefore be qualified.

Replicability

In terms of replicability on the local level, it is clear that an ongoing engagement with the theme discrimination in housing market is necessary in Dortmund. The replicability possibilities are high, and there are various projects and programs that focus on this topic in Dortmund, as segregation and informal structures occur dominantly as a result of such discrimination.

Contact person

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More information and documentation here



Rehabilitation of the Emergency Transit Center (ETC) of Timișoara

In the context of an increasing inflow of immigrants and new arrivals in the Timisoara area, a 3 years long renovation project started in 2017 to supplement and improve the existing accommodation places at the level of regional centers. This rehabilitation and modernization facilitated the integration of migrants by offering families the possibility to live together and to have access to free English classes, libraries, internet and schools (i.e for minors).



Project beneficiaries are beneficiaries of international protection & third country nationals with legal stay in the country, local community (all ages & genders)



Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (European Commission)



Romania, Timișoara



Project run by the General Inspectorate for Immigration in Romania

Objectives

- to supplement the existing accommodation places at the level of regional centers, by freeing up the space that was occupied by the Emergency Transit Center (CTU) within CRCPSA (Reception center for asylum seekers) Timișoara, taking into account a possible influx of migrants on the territory of Romania
- to separate the internal workflows of CRCPSA Timișoara and CTU in the context in which the two categories of accommodated persons benefit from different accommodation conditions and material assistance
- to implement in optimal conditions of the Tripartite Agreement concluded between the Government of Romania, UNHCR and IOM (Law no. 291/2008) by putting to use UNHCR the investment objective financed and achieved by this project

Management & Operation

Besides regular monitoring visits paid by the project manager to project sites, a thorough self-evaluation process involving project beneficiaries, partners and staff took place at the end of the project's first year. Internal analysis is conducted using a complex database specifically tailored for supervision of project activities. The project also sees annually several 'mission controls' conducted by the funder, as well as one audit and final approval of activities by relevant authorities in order to approve its next stages.

Results & impact

- 200 new accommodation places for the reception and accommodation of refugees recognized under UNHCR mandate for temporary evacuation in Romania and subsequent relocation
- New Transit center building - New Access control building

- Playground - Multifunctional football, volleyball, basketball court
- Modern facilities in all accommodation, bathrooms, kitchens and common areas, elevator for people with disabilities
- Thermal power plant - Generator set - Video intercom system - Voice alarm system - Video surveillance system - Fire alarm detection system - Emerging gas fire extinguishing system

Lessons learned

Implementing this project eased the process of welcoming and integration of immigrants.

Constraints

The assistance provided by the national integration programme in Romania does not sufficiently meet the complex needs of beneficiaries of international protection and other foreigners with legal stay in the country. Further, many migrant individuals are either excluded from or cannot access this integration programme. Those living in remote communities or rural areas are difficult to spot, for example, and often find themselves in particularly vulnerable or isolated circumstances without means of support.

Replicability

In terms of replicability potential on the national level, this project shows replicability potential and more such projects should be implemented in different parts of Romania, in order to adequately address the need of the increasing immigrant population in the country.

Retrieved from the project's website on July 1st, 2022.

**Related resources:**

Video released on the UNHCR Facebook page:
<https://bit.ly/3O9pgl9>

Article published on the UNHCR website:
<https://bit.ly/3O9L3ZK>

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The assistance provided by the national integration programme in Romania does not sufficiently meet the complex needs of beneficiaries of international protection and other foreigners with legal stay in the country. Further, many migrant individuals are either excluded from or cannot access this integration programme. Those living in remote communities or rural areas are difficult to spot, for example, and often find themselves in particularly vulnerable or isolated circumstances without means of support.



Discover here what the new emergency transit center looks like after its rehabilitation and modernization



Outlook

Apart from the lessons learned from each specific project documented in this handbook, several overall conclusions can be drawn.

These projects and the many actors they involved play an **essential role** for migrant youth integration. This type of smaller and local initiatives often **fill in the gaps** left by integration policies developed at the national level by providing complementary services (gaps also rendered deeper by the too often neoliberal approach to service provision and policy-making leading to the out-sourcing of services). This is true for all countries represented in this handbook, but the key contribution these initiatives bring to migrant youth integration is more significant in countries showing very hostile policies towards migrants (e.g. Hungary, the United Kingdom).

The starting point of all projects and initiatives documented is always the **identification of need not met: an existing issue not already or not sufficiently tackled** in the system of services available to young migrants (e.g. lack of opportunities for social interaction, limited offer of language classes, lack of diversity management and intercultural awareness in the labour market, lack of access to decent housing etc.). These needs may evolve due to changing migratory situations (see for instance the arrivals of migrants to Europe through Belarus, the unpredictable arrivals of Belarusians in 2020 or most recently Ukrainians in 2022 in Poland).

The positive impact of many of the initiatives described in the handbook start from a simple and logical assumption: asylum seekers, beneficiaries of international protection and other non-EU migrants are the **best judges of their needs** during their integration process*. Letting them assess their needs, actively listening to them and/or providing them with the space and means to start initiatives and projects answering these needs often appeared to be the first step to tackle the gaps in systems of services and policies on integration. It can happen that the requirements fixed by funding institutions constitute a challenge for practitioners since they did not accurately meet beneficiaries needs.

The involvement of the beneficiaries of the initiatives in their development not only ensures that projects accurately address their 'not met needs' and concretely impact their lives, but directly promotes the **empowerment and participation** of young migrants (see for instance Möttesplats Otto in Sweden or Train of Hope in Germany). Overall, adopting an **inclusive and participatory approach** in the development and management of initiatives and projects appears to be a key element of promising integrative practices.

Other elements that can contribute to make an integrative practice promising are transparent monitoring, evaluation and validation processes. Yet these may be impeded by

*This reality was also stressed by Jamil Alyou, former refugee and active member of Train oh Hope e.V. (see page 12) during MIMY final conference on 13th October 2022.



financial constraints: when the survival of projects depends on external (often public) funding, organizations may be reluctant to be fully transparent about the challenges their initiatives have faced and highlight broader constraints.

From the identification of needs to the granting of funds, projects' lifecycle is sometimes quite lengthy while at the same time being often limited and fixed in advance (mainly due to funding requirements). Priorities and needs may however change in the meantime. A certain **flexibility** is then required to efficiently meet beneficiaries' needs. It may be challenging for some institutions like NGOs to show flexibility, since they rely on funding institutions and therefore have to follow certain requirements fixed by them.

Most of the time, the projects and the support they provide would need to be implemented over a longer period of time. This requirement of **sustainability** makes particularly sense since integration is a dynamic and never-ending open process of change and adaptation during the life course. For instance, the AZF3 project in Germany stressed this need to provide support not only to facilitate the entry on the labour market but also for the stay in it after.

Some initiatives continue despite the lack of financial resources, proving that the end of a project's funding (meaning most of the time the official end of a project) does not necessarily match the disappearance of the need it was supposed to meet. **Lack of funding** constitutes one of the constraints most often quoted. Besides, NGOs also sometimes have to adapt to the changing nature of funding streams, which requires fundraising skills (and thus a certain level of professionalism) that not all may have.

Most of the projects selected are **small-scale** and implemented **at the local level** (neighborhood, district, city/municipality). The implementation at this specific scale shows benefits:

- better accessibility to & inclusion of the beneficiaries through direct and recurring interactions and consequently the provision of more personalized, tailored support;
- creation of trustworthy, long-term relationships potentially strengthening beneficiaries' wellbeing and feeling of belonging and attachment to the place they live in and to the host society;
- sustainable relationships and efficient partnerships/synergies between services & actors working for and with young migrants. Networking and cooperation are made easier, often for the benefit of beneficiaries who, when needed, are for instance redirected to other appropriate services or who are provided with more diversified and complementary services;



- potentially high impact on local policies, facilitated by the presence of double-hatting players involved in projects (who can be at the same time practitioner and policymaker).

The promising integrative practices presented in the handbook by design have as primary beneficiaries of their activities migrants in the process of building their lives in a new country. Yet their work positively impacts the **host society at large**. Integration processes go both ways and projects' beneficiaries are not solely responsible for their integration within the host society. This reality particularly emerged in some projects, such as those focusing on labour market integration of refugees, which often involved both asylum seekers/beneficiaries of international protection (e.g. skills assessment, support with the job application process) and employers/employment agencies (e.g. intercultural training, diversity management).

Members of the host society have an active role to play: many projects were either started by or involved in the long run volunteers. When this is the case, great attention is often given to volunteers' training. This involvement of committed members of the host society shows beneficial consequences for the integration process which, by definition, as a two-way process, underpins this active participation.

The **replication potential** differs from project to project. This can be due to **structural factors**: for instance, the system of folk high schools developed in Scandinavia knows no real equivalent in other European countries (except in Germany, where similar educational structures exist). Furthermore, volunteering and vocational training are not systematically regulated the same way and the recourse to these professional practices must therefore be thought out. **Divergent overall projects' priority** can also lead to much higher replication potential. This is the case for instance for some EU-funded projects directly putting replicability as a main goal. Finally, the heterogeneity of **policies** also has to be taken into consideration. At the local level, municipalities can be driving forces in leading promising practices (e.g. in Dudelange, Luxembourg and Barnsley, United Kingdom) while at the national level, far-right government (e.g. in Hungary) can do the opposite when it implements a measure (integration agreement) partly addressing migrants' needs before completely and deliberately dismantling it.

The goal of this outlook was to deepen our understanding of practices supporting migrant youth integration from the many inspiring and promising projects documented in this handbook. Several conclusions on the main elements contributing to practices' positive impact on the life of young migrants and success of initiatives were highlighted:

- the benefits of **starting small and at the local level**
- the need to **involve beneficiaries** from the very beginning
- the need to secure **sustainable funding**
- the need to systematically set tight **cooperation, communication and coordination** with other actors already active in the field



Overall, it is clear that the sustainable implementation of such practices requires efforts and non-negligible human and financial resources. Nevertheless, the impact of these practices may extend way beyond its individual beneficiaries and benefit the entire society as it enables young migrants to participate and actively contribute to their new contexts. The role of these practices in meeting the unmet needs of young migrant appears as significant as it is necessary to fill the gaps created by fragmented integration policies.

It is therefore our hope that this handbook efficiently raises awareness on existing practices regarding migrant youth integration and contributes to knowledge-sharing between practitioners, policymakers and other actors involved in this field.

Policy recommendations

The following policy recommendations for socio-economic integration of young adult migrants emerged from the analysis of results of research activities within the 9 case study countries involved in the MIMY project, from the workshops on integration with young migrants and stakeholders in the MIMY case studies, and the final conference in Brussels in October 2022.

Policy recommendations on the policymaking process

Young migrant integration policies should take into account the processual, contingent character of integration

Policymakers and stakeholders working on integration policies should use the term integration carefully and be specific in their understanding and definition of it. This notion should be used in a way that does not stigmatise young migrants as not full members of the host societies (or 'others'). Integration should be conceived as a never-ending, contingent, and dynamic process. Integration processes evolve over time and are open in direction and outcome. Time and life course perspectives are thus essential if policies want to effectively grasp the constantly evolving integration dynamics over the course of time.

Policies should be context-specific

Any detailed policies put in place to ameliorate the difficulties that young migrants may experience must take into consideration the varied and complex contexts that different categories of migrant youth (asylum seekers and refugees, unaccompanied minors, young undocumented migrants, stateless migrants, LGBTQIA+ refugees, victims of trafficking) live in and accommodate to these differences through specific policies that are relevant in the particular context. Yet, it is crucial that the support is not utilized to govern these groups and to pit differently vulnerable groups against each other to identify and separate more or less "deserving" youth from each other, but that all categorizations of migrant youth are catered to according to their context specific needs. We recommend policymakers and stakeholders to design more integration programmes and services specifically targeting young migrants as they face a unique set of challenges and uncertainties produced by their 'double transition' into the host country and into adulthood.

Policies should adopt local integration models rather than one-size-fits-all approach

One-size-fits-all approach on the national level cannot address specific geographical, demographic and cultural context on a local level. Even in countries with a very high number of immigrants, high differences and diversity exist, for instance at the municipal level. Policymakers should ensure that this diversity is also reflected on the institutional level.

Policies should consider the interconnectedness of integration issues faced by young migrants

Issues faced by young migrants can be highly interconnected: limited access to language courses (and lack of multilingual information) may hinder the access to migrants' rights, opportunities, and available services; non-recognition of foreign diploma's and racism and discrimination faced during the educational process hinder then the professional integration, unemployment can cause financial obstacles to access private housing; racist and discriminatory practices negatively impact all other fields of integration etc. It is therefore of significant importance to be aware of this interconnectedness of issues in order to derive policies tackling them in a more efficient way.



Policymakers should have regular direct interaction with young migrants

The MIMY workshops on integration (held in Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sweden, the United Kingdom) showed how valued and rare direct meeting opportunities between policy users (here young migrants), policymakers, and stakeholders are. These allow the reciprocal exchange of experience while contributing to raising awareness of current issues and priorities and developing more empathy and understanding towards the complexity of migrants' realities and lives. On the migrants' side, it can increase feelings of being seen and recognized and empowers young migrants to suggest ideas. Regular exchanges and communication between policymakers, policy users (e.g. youth workers), and young migrants should be made the rule and could enable better understanding and help to establish/discuss/draft inclusive policies for young migrants with more practical solutions/applications.

Policies should target all actors involved in the integration process

Integration has to go both ways- in theory, and in practice. Policymakers are therefore highly encouraged to target young migrants as primary actors of their own integration processes but also institutions (educational, cultural, medical etc.), private actors, and the host society at large. To counterbalance the sole responsibilities of young migrants, everyone/all citizens should be made aware of his/her own role in young migrants' integration processes, for the benefit of all. For instance, local young citizens and former migrants can engage as migrant youth mentors and experts by experience who can assist in the navigation of services. Where migrants are involved in mainstream youth provision, ensure facilitators and educators are trained in migration and integration-related issues to facilitate the inclusion of people from a migrant background. Comprehensive integration frameworks should therefore involve all residents and adopt a holistic approach – thus ensuring intersectional cooperation between different services.

Practical measures to foster young migrants' socio-economic integration

FORMAL & NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Provide efficient, tailored pre- and post-migration language learning opportunities

Lack of language proficiency due to the lack of efficient language learning opportunities has a cost for migrants and for their host societies. Not only does it delay the entry into the labour market and the successful completion of further education, but it also strongly impedes social contact, participation, and shows negative consequences on migrants' wellbeing, belonging feeling and integration process in general. Providing migrants with efficient language learning opportunities is an urgent step to take.

Ensure transparent, quick, free-of-cost recognition process of diplomas obtained abroad

Many migrants suffer sudden halts and delays in their plans and integration processes in the host country due to non-recognition of their diplomas and qualifications obtained abroad and long waiting periods. It is therefore urgent, instrumental, and strongly recommended to adopt more transparent, quick, free of cost diploma recognition processes.

LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION

Foster inclusive and welcoming workplaces

To ensure a swift entry and sustainable stay into the labour market, both employers, employees and administrations (e.g. job centers) must be regularly trained on intercultural aspects (regarding intercultural differences concerning time, hierarchy, money, social relations as well as daily issues faced by young migrants which negatively impact their short and long-term professional integration (e.g. unconscious bias, racism and discrimination, other structural obstacles).



SOCIAL CONTACT & WELLBEING

Facilitate meaningful local interactions and activities involving young migrants together with young people in the wider local population

At local level, stakeholders should provide opportunities for exchange between newly arrived young migrants and the local population, which enables meaningful social contact, contributes to network formation, facilitates resource transfer while at the same time allowing for contradictions and providing the space for negotiating access to resources and local citizenship. This also means paying attention to “micro-publics” (settings such as parks, playgrounds, sports sites, neighbourhood streets, community centres), where everyday interactions already take place and to value their function as enabling encounters. Besides, it challenges prejudices and helps build non-oppressive identities based on understandings of equality.

Extend policy attention beyond structural service areas

Equal attention should be paid to and funding should be ensured for leisure (sport and arts), language learning, social connections, intercultural learning, mental health and wellbeing alongside essential integration interventions within structural service areas (e.g. education, housing, employment). These areas provide important spaces for more holistic integration work with young people, including confidence-building, and connecting young people to a wider set of services which are vital to sustain engagement with employment, education and training.

Financially support local stakeholders and the local level as setting of arrival and integration

The local level is the spatial context for migrants' arrival and integration, and for young migrants in vulnerable conditions this level is of particular importance. Localities offer distinct opportunities for migrants to participate in the social domains. Stakeholders at regional, national and EU levels should acknowledge this reality and therefore adequately equip local stakeholders with means allowing them to design approaches fostering migrant integration.

AWARENESS-RAISING & ADVOCACY

Make young migrants' needs more visible in statutory service provision

Through dedicated migrant youth workers within councils (e.g. local committees, youth councils) that can connect young migrants to services, entitlements, training, and employment opportunities, young migrants' needs can be made more visible. This would allow to effectively bring together ‘youth’ and ‘migrant’ services and related activities, therefore adopting a more holistic approach to young people's socioeconomic development.

Actively deconstruct hostile, inaccurate framing of migration discourse

The lack of effect of the share of asylum seekers on national labour markets and education systems has been demonstrated. There is no scientific evidence (there is rather counter-evidence) that refugees inflows add pressure on economies and societies, as reported in some parts of the public discourse. There is therefore a need to raise awareness of more accurate, evidence-based discourses in order to deconstruct such simplifying, hostile discourses.

HOUSING

Ensure a focus beyond the immediate crisis in initial resettlement

Access to entitlements should be redirected to ensure young people are supported to make choices that facilitate longer-term integration. For example, allow access to accommodation in preferred locations where social networks and support are located or developing.

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Project Identity

Project name EMpowerment through liquid Integration of Migrant Youth in vulnerable conditions (MIMY)

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