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Best Practices

Erasmus+ Project:

Indicators of Good VET Practice for Refugees

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Project Team

Prof. Michele Brunelli (Italy)
 Prof. Christian Helms Jorgensen (Denmark)
 Prof. Annette Ostendorf (Austria)
 Prof. Matthias Pilz (Germany)
 Dr. Laura Galeotti (Italy)
 Dr. Junmin Li (Germany)
 Hannes Hautz (Austria)
 Katrin J. Posch (Germany)
 Simone Rabl (Austria)
 Michele Tallarini (Italy)

Critical Friends

Klaus Ronsdorf
 Dieter Wlcek

Graphic Design and Layout

Christian Gronowski

Project Information

Information on the project is available on the national and international project websites.

International: <https://www.goodvet.uni-koeln.de/en/>

Germany: <https://www.goodvet.uni-koeln.de/>

Italy: <https://dlfc.unibg.it/it/ricerca/attivita-ricerca/progetti>

Austria: <https://www.uibk.ac.at/iol/goodvet/>

Danish: <https://forskning.ruc.dk/da/projects/indikatorer-for-god-praksis-i-erhvervsuddannelse-for-flygtninge-e>



Best Practice examples

About the project:

The current refugee migration is a challenge for European Union (EU) countries. One goal of the European refugee policy is the integration of refugees with a permanent perspective. Vocational education training (VET) plays a key role here. The Erasmus+ project 'Indicators of Good VET practice for refugees' (GoodVET) aims to make existing experiences in this area accessible. Therefore, the project analyses and aggregates the experiences gained at the practical level in four European countries—Austria, Denmark, Germany and Italy.

About the Best Practice examples:

There have been 11 quality indicators identified that are particularly relevant for the integration of refugees. The following collection of the best practices (BP) of all project countries is based on these 11 identified quality indicators. The aim is to illustrate them through practice examples; consequently, not every best practice example contains all of the 11 indicators. The descriptions illustrate the selected quality indicators, which are well developed in the examples given. Therefore, these examples of best practices should be seen as 'good' examples, which do not claim to be perfect or to be the best examples of all the quality indicators and in a European context. The distinction between 'good' and 'best' practice can be very subjective and the examples presented here are for illustrative purposes only.

Although the BPs surely contain partly country-specific characteristics, it is expected that they can be projected onto other EU countries because they are obtained from three separate European regions (Northern, Central and Southern).

The best practices are presented here by country—Austria, Denmark, Germany and Italy. In order for the reader to quickly find the illustration of certain indicators, these indicators are shown in parentheses following the given examples. The indicators are structured into input, process and output dimensions.

All the products from this project are available on the project website free of charge. For more information, please visit our website:

<http://www.goodvet.uni-koeln.de/home/>

<https://www.uibk.ac.at/iol/goodvet/index.html.de>

<https://dlfc.unibg.it/it/ricerca/attivita-ricerca/progetti>

<https://forskning.ruc.dk/en/projects/indikatorer-for-god-praksis-i-erhvervsuddannelse-for-flygtninge-e>

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Best practices in Austria

Company-based training for refugees to become cooks and restaurant specialists

General description

The Geisterburg is a restaurant and apprenticeship training company, operating since 1985. It is located in a historic building in the city Hall in Tyrol, Austria, and it combines regional and Mediterranean cuisine. The Geisterburg currently has 25 employees and is open every day (no rest day). Typically, four to five apprentices are part of the team. Apprentices are necessary for the smooth running of the business. They are trained to become professional cooks and restaurant specialists.

Since 2006, the Geisterburg has been a subsidiary of a family company. Two additional restaurants and apprenticeship training companies belong to the Cammerlanders GmbH. All three companies share the same corporate philosophy—they want to be a small part of a ‘good world’. Ethical values are the basis of all their thoughts, actions and decisions. Financial results are not their only success factors. What is far more decisive is the contribution they make to the common good of all. They see themselves as an active part of society and acknowledge their obligations and responsibilities in this context.

Integration is a key issue for Cammerlanders GmbH. Respect for the uniqueness of each and every individual, as well as joy in the diversity and differences between all people, are important to them. Hence, they aim to provide decent jobs for all and to employ people regardless of their social, cultural or ethnic background, mental or physical condition, age or sexual orientation. The company has already received several awards for its commitment as an integration and training company—e.g. the Integration Award 2007, the Tyrolean Apprenticeship Training Company Award 2013, the Special Award 2013 for Outstanding Achievements in the Field of Apprenticeship Training in Austria and the ‘We are Inclusive’ Award 2015.

The Geisterburg has been training refugees from different countries, such as Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, for more than seven years. Some of these refugees have already successfully completed their apprenticeship and have subsequently worked in other companies. Thus far, only asylum seekers and non-recognised refugees have started an apprenticeship at the Geisterburg. Currently, two refugees are employed as apprentices. The company is thus very experienced in the training of refugees and its manager is convinced that, if somebody completes an apprenticeship here, she or he will be integrated and become an active member of society.

Links: <https://Geisterburg.at/>, <http://www.cammerlander.at/>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Access and entrance requirements/ Learning goals and content

Access and entrance requirements

According to the Geisterburg manager, the access conditions must be kept as low as possible so that entry barriers for refugees are not too strong. In order to complete the apprenticeship, a certain basic education (reading, writing and arithmetic) must, of course, be completed. However, the basics are usually sufficient for training and working in the company. For the Geisterburg, it is more significant that there is a culture of openness in the company, through which the apprentices feel comfortable and are motivated. In such an atmosphere, the refugees often acquire the necessary skills to complete the apprenticeship within a short period of time in the company.

Even language skills are not necessary to begin an apprenticeship at the Geisterburg, as refugees can be trained without German skills at the beginning and can learn the language very quickly if they are encouraged. The manager reports that some refugees, for example, spoke German fluently within six months and managed to complete their training without any prior basic language or professional knowledge.

Learning goals and content

There is a written curriculum that is provided by the Chamber of Commerce and is mandatory for all apprenticeship training companies of a certain profession. However, the Geisterburg pays attention to adapting the learning goals and content to the needs of the refugees. It is possible to prolong the duration of the apprenticeship (e.g. four instead of three years, second grade is attended twice) or to change and even cancel contents (acquisition of a partial qualification) if apprentices have learning difficulties. Both are supported by the management, for refugees who do an apprenticeship training at the Geisterburg and are in need of a prolonged apprenticeship period or a partial qualification.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

Knowledge of German is not a prerequisite for starting apprenticeship training at the Geisterburg, as the apprentices can also be trained in another language, e.g. English, in the company at the beginning. The language can be learned during professional activity, especially the technical language, because this is very company- or sector-specific. In this respect, informal learning plays an integral role at the Geisterburg. Consequently, the management ensures that they have the right apprenticeship trainers who can cope with the individual needs of trainees and work with a specific person. Diversity and intercultural training for trainers is recommended by the Geisterburg. The management also pays attention to fostering social contacts between their employees because, thus, the refugees learn both the German language and cultural codes very quickly.

The company philosophy and the personal philosophy of the training manager are decisive for refugees' learning during their apprenticeship training at the Geisterburg. Diversity and intercultural sensitivity depend on the initiative of the training manager and the team behind. Due to the training manager's initiative, a culture of diversity and inclusion has been implemented at the Geisterburg. He lives a culture of openness, trying to include refugees and support them, which has been transferred to the team. Basic openness of the team and the guests is, of course, a prerequisite. If they do not tolerate this inclusive culture, then they are not welcome at the Geisterburg at all.

Selection of teaching methods

The philosophy of the company to be open and inclusive is also essential for the selection of its teaching methods. The apprenticeship trainers of the Geisterburg develop an integrative learning environment that is characterised by recognition of diversity and promotes inclusion. Whether individual support and integration into the company work, depends strongly on the trainers.

Since refugees are very different, the learning methods of the Geisterburg are very specific and are adapted to each individual. Learning in the company takes place primarily during the work process and informally. This means, above all, that apprentices are given the opportunity to actively participate in the learning process, to carry out practical and meaningful activities and to work in a team.

Output: Assessment of learning progress/ Absence and dropout rate

Assessment of learning progress

At the Geisterburg, the assessment of the learning progress is carried out through a formal assessment via apprentice evaluation and an informal assessment via direct feedback from trainers and employees. This gives apprentices recommendations on how to improve their practices and encourages them to openly discuss and evaluate their mistakes. When dealing with refugees, in particular, the Geisterburg trainers try to motivate them by emphasizing their strengths and highlighting the positive aspects of their actions.

Absence and dropout rate

The main reason for someone to drop out of the Geisterburg apprenticeship refugee training is, apart from personal factors, the lack of individual support. A trusted person, who supports them in dealing with authorities, with their housing search and in language learning, would be very helpful. This is usually missing when it comes to the dropouts at the company. In addition, according to the Geisterburg manager, a lack of knowledge about the training measures increases the dropout risk. Refugees often do not know what effects dropping out would have on them—they would lose their work permit in the host country as a result.

In order to prevent dropouts, an inclusive organisational culture is created at the Geisterburg. In addition, support measures, in form of personal care and language training, are implemented by the company. Support from social workers and legal security would also be very helpful to prevent absences and control dropout rates.

BFI Tirol, Pole position—Ready for the job market

General description

By own account, the BFI (*Berufsförderungsinstitut*) is the largest private educational institution in Austria. It offers a wide range of training and continuing education programmes. These include company training, labour market training, apprenticeship training, school and academic qualifications, language courses and recognised certificates. The BFI is an economically acting enterprise with a market-oriented educational offer.

Refugees can take various courses and programmes at the BFI, including: language courses, the so-called boarding course and the subsequent compulsory school-leaving course, the Open Learning Center, the ABC Café and the “Pole Position—Ready for the Job Market” project presented in more detail here.

The ‘PolePosition’ project aims to facilitate sustainable integration of third-country nationals with longer-term residence prospects (migrants, recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection), who are over 16 years of age, into the labour market through language and work-related preparatory courses. The current participants in the project come from various nations. ‘They had to leave their home countries because of war and persecution [...] and want to start a new life here. But for a new beginning it is important to find a job.’ The motivation is high, but in reality, it turns out that it is not always easy to find a suitable job on the Austrian labour market—even though the participants already have a good knowledge of German.

The course helps the participants improve their German language skills even further, acquire knowledge about the Austrian labour market and learn the necessary specialist vocabulary.

The project offers the participants Austrian labour market orientation, points out perspectives and prepares the participants to meet the labour market demands and obtain further training with tailor-made qualification measures. In addition to communication training, technical language courses and initial insights into practical work in various fields are offered—for catering trade occupations, for nursing and care occupations, for industrial and technical occupations and for trade and sales occupations.

The Pole Position project is financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs and the Province of Tyrol.

Links: <https://www.bfi.tirol>; <https://www.bfi.at>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Contact with learners/Learning goals and content/ Support systems and coordination/ Access and entrance requirements

Contact with learners

The first meeting with participants involves a conversation between an employee and a participant. The results of the first meeting affect the group composition, admission into the programme and course methods. Thus, the BFI has the opportunity to respond flexibly to the needs of the participants.

Learning goals and content

The curriculum is adapted to the demand for training needs and the labour market. This distinguishes the organisation from other schools and public institutions, where curricula are at least partly given as a central framework and are not often changed.

Support systems and coordination

As an adult education institution, the BFI does not see itself as responsible for support systems nor social, psychological or legal help. However, the latter can partly be initiated, if necessary, in the form of case management and educational support. Resources are lacking for in-house counselling on psychosocial and legal issues, childcare and similar. These resources would have to be offered, if they are offered at all, to all groups—which is not the mandate of the institution.

Access and entrance requirements

There are certain entry requirements for courses, which can differ for each course. Some of them are: diplomas, work experience, specialist knowledge, formal education, language skills, basic education or age and, for some courses, demographic factors such as residence permits. There are also trial days after which people can be placed in other courses if it turns out they did not attend a suitable course. In this way, the BFI tries to divide the participants into courses as appropriately as possible.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

Interculturally trained trainers are indispensable. They should be prepared for possible cultural conflicts; thus, the courses also provide information about cultural values and codes. Co-teaching of specialist trainers and language trainers is often fruitful.

Selection of teaching methods

The points to be considered with respect to the teaching methods employed are self-evident for the BFI trainers. Participants are activated by examining their previous learning and learning motivation, exploring future plans, being allowed to contribute by promoting their practical skills through collaborative and team-oriented tasks. The needs of the participants are addressed through support keys and small groups.

Output: Absence and dropout rate/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Absence and dropout rate

The dropout rate is relatively low, only 5 to 10%. An important reason why participating refugees drop out is often that they find work and accept it during the course. Due to official pressure on them, unskilled labour employment is often accepted without completing training. Consequently, it is important to make them even more aware that they have better and, above all, longer-term opportunities on the labour market once they complete their training. Many drop out of a course for a short-term job opportunity, lose the temporary job after a few months and then want to re-enter the course.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

At the beginning of the training measure, an admission procedure is carried out, a test is conducted and an official competence assessment takes place. At the end of the training, certificates are issued by the BFI, which is known to employers throughout Austria.

Educating refugees at part-time vocational schools

General description

The *Landesberufsschule* Feldkirch (LBS Feldkirch) vocational school is the largest vocational school in the Austrian federal state of Vorarlberg. The school is part of the dual vocational education and training (VET)

system in Austria. Currently, it has 55 working teachers and 1,300 apprentices, aged 15 to 44 from over 20 countries, attend this school. The apprentices attend school generally once a week, while they spend the rest of the time involved in enterprise-based training in the company. Depending on their chosen trade, an apprenticeship last from two to four years. LBS Feldkirch educates apprentices in 16 different commercial and industrial-technical professions—i.e. office assistant, hairdresser and wigmaker, beautician, baker, florist, fitness coach, electrical engineer, information technologist, etc. In addition, the school offers the possibility to combine the apprenticeship training with a higher school certificate (*Lehre mit Matura*) that lasts a total of four to five years.

The diversity of the apprentices at LBS Feldkirch is very high. Even in the same class, the learners differ widely in terms of age, previous education and cultural background. Therefore, the values of cooperation, solidarity and tolerance are of special concern to the school management. A welcoming atmosphere and appreciative interaction with one another, regardless of gender, religion or origin, are essential principles at school. The school management emphasises careful manners and a respectful communication culture. Everyone is welcome at the school and should be encouraged and challenged according to their individual abilities. The current key topic of the school is solidarity. For this reason, the apprentices deal with this key topic in their workshops, seminars, classes and various activities.

At LBS Feldkirch, there are currently between 40 and 50 refugees in attendance, both with and without residence status, from Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. For the school management, it is also of high relevance to recognise that the refugees are a very heterogeneous group with respect to their previous education, cultural background, language knowledge, etc. Therefore, there are no special refugee classes at LBS Feldkirch. Refugees are included in regular classes, depending on the subject area. Like all other apprentices, they have to be encouraged and challenged according to their personal needs and abilities.

Link: www.lbsfe1.snv.at/.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Support system and coordination/ Learning goals and content

Support system and coordination

LBS Feldkirch offers various support measures to foster successful completion of school and to reduce the dropout rate of refugees. Language training and learning aid provided by teachers have proved their value thus far. The establishment of an integrative school culture and an atmosphere of openness increase the well-being and success rates of refugees. Therefore, values such as unity, acceptance and solidarity are lived at LBS Feldkirch. In order to identify the individual entry requirements of the refugees, there is close cooperation and coordination between the school and the training companies. In addition, the assistance of social workers is organised by LBS Feldkirch to additionally support the refugees when dealing with authorities, housing search, psychological issues, etc.

Learning goals and content

The Ministry of Education is responsible for designing the compulsory curricula. There is, however, the possibility of prolonging the apprenticeship period in case of special support needs. This requires the provision of a psychological report, proving the existence of partial performance weaknesses that require individual support. If these conditions are met, the apprenticeship can be extended by one or two years. The LBS Feldkirch school management recommends checking whether such a prolongation of the apprenticeship period is necessary for certain refugees, right at the beginning of the apprenticeship.

There is also a possibility of shortening the apprenticeship period at LBS Feldkirch when a certain period of previous training is recognised by the Chamber of Commerce. However, this is only the case if an apprenticeship has already been completed in another occupational field. The LBS Feldkirch school management also points out that previous professional knowledge possessed by refugees, which was obtained in their country of origin, can hardly ever be considered due to a lack of recognition procedures in Austria.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

At LBS Feldkirch, specialist knowledge is taught in the German language. Professional terms and professional skills are difficult to teach if learners do not speak German well enough. Sufficient knowledge of German is thus a prerequisite for successful completion. Consequently, special language courses are offered to refugees at LBS Feldkirch. These are, however, not general language courses but professional language training courses that aim to prepare students for their lessons. These courses are provided for four hours per week and are taught by specialist teachers. Refugees can bring their school documents and discuss issues they have with understanding with their teachers. Hence, these courses represent a combination of learning aid and language training for refugees.

In the opinion of the LBS Feldkirch school management, training in intercultural competences and sensibility, as well as in teaching German for illiterates, is crucial for teachers of these language courses. In 2015, the LBS Feldkirch teachers were not prepared for these challenges and were overburdened as a result. Consequently, it is necessary that further education opportunities are offered for teachers on these topics in order to adequately foster the learning of refugees.

Selection of teaching methods

The selection of suitable teaching methods is the central factor when dealing with refugees at LBS Feldkirch. According to the school management, a good relationship between learners and teachers is essential for activating and motivating the refugee learners as capable persons with potential and for initiating learning. Therefore, LBS Feldkirch promotes an integrative learning culture that is characterised by openness, solidarity and tolerance.

At LBS Feldkirch, refugees are encouraged and challenged according to their individual abilities. The teachers endeavour to accompany and support the refugees in their professional and personal development. Furthermore, the teaching is adapted to the different learning types of the apprentices. Refugees are given the opportunity to become actively involved in the learning process, to solve self-managed learning tasks and to collaborate with other apprentices in team-based forms of work. Through practice-oriented learning contents, they can develop skills for dealing with practical activities and apply the learned competences in practice. The teachers at LBS Feldkirch also support the integration of refugees and deal with discrimination and human rights issues in the classroom. For instance, some classes at the school took part in the Amnesty International Letter Marathon in December 2018. The preparatory work for this involved an intensive examination of human rights and a critical look at Austria with regard to the observance of human rights.

Output: Assessment of learning progress/ Absence and dropout rate

Assessment of learning progress

At LBS Feldkirch, the assessment of the learning progress of the refugees is an important element for adapting future learning activities and for motivating the refugees through positive feedback. In addition to the formal assessment on the basis of grades, informal assessment is carried out by the teachers. From the LBS Feldkirch school management perspective, good teacher-student relationships, intercultural competences and teacher sensitivity are critical factors for individual assessment design.

Absence and dropout rate

A major reason for refugees to dropout of LBS Feldkirch is low language skills, as some of the refugees have very poor knowledge of the German language. Some of them do not even understand simple questions or are illiterate. In addition, personal factors, such as psychological problems or a lack of individual motivation and responsibility, increase absence and dropout rates at the school. The legal dependency of their residence status also plays a decisive role. Some of the refugee apprentices at LBS Feldkirch had to leave the country during their apprenticeship training.

In order to reduce absence and dropout rates of refugees, LBS Feldkirch is supporting the development of language skills. Additional German courses are offered by the school and designed to meet the individual needs of the refugees, which can decrease the dropout rates. According to the LBS Feldkirch school management, intercultural training for teachers can also promote an integrative learning environment and help avoid absences and dropouts.

Transitional courses of the regional Tyrol school board (*Landesschulrat Tirol, LSR*) — 'Training courses for young people with little knowledge of German as the language of instruction'

General description

The so-called transitional courses were set up at vocational secondary schools beginning in the 2015/16 academic year and at general secondary schools in 2016/17 in order to make it easier for young refugees, who are of compulsory school age, to enter the Austrian school system and the working world.

The task of this training course is to prepare course participants—who have completed compulsory education in another country but who, e.g. for linguistic reasons, cannot sufficiently follow the lessons of a general secondary school or who have attended a general secondary school in their country of origin but who, due to breaks in their school career or insufficient knowledge of German, are not yet able to successfully participate in the lessons of upper secondary school—for successful completion of the fifth grade of the general secondary school. In accordance with the above-mentioned target groups, this type of course is to be conducted as a one-year course of study or in one-semester shortened form. Basic knowledge of German and English as the languages of instruction must be available.

Instruction in courses at vocational secondary schools takes place according to a specially developed curriculum that consists of 31 hours per week, where, in addition to practical instruction, the main focus is on learning the German language so that one third of the lessons are spent on German as a foreign or second language. Courses at general secondary schools focus on general education subjects. In addition to German as a foreign/second language, a special focus is placed on mathematics and English. The group sizes are between 15 and 20 students. The courses conclude with course confirmation. The aim is for the pupils to be able to attend a secondary school afterwards or to begin a dual education curriculum.

The LSR (*Landesschulrat Tirol*) also relies on supporting measures in the courses, such as school-psychology, educational counselling and the mobile intercultural team (MIT).

Link: <https://www.lsr-t.gv.at/de/content/drei-übergangsklassen-für-jugendliche-flüchtlinge>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Contact with learners/ Access and entrance requirements/ Support systems and coordination

Contact with learners

The first encounter takes place in several ways, informally, through one-on-one interviews and personal contact with institutions. Students are also often enrolled in these courses by tutors at primary care institutions or other organisations. The initial contact has an impact on class composition and, above all, on admission or referral to other educational institutions. The course of training can be changed and there is also counselling on educational offers available in-house.

Access and entrance requirements

There are precise entrance requirements for the classes because success is not guaranteed with groups that are too heterogeneous. A certain schooling and language level is required. Previous education, language skills, basic education and age are decisive enrolment factors. There are trial days in classes to see whether a change into other forms of education or courses is necessary. The refugees are informed about the admission requirements in advance.

The language level of pupils is no longer tested in advance, as such tests have proven ineffective. Instead, the level is determined through conversations and then by the teachers during the first three weeks of courses.

Support systems and coordination

Support for refugees is organised or made available as needed—e.g. in the form of support from carers, legal advice, psychological support and more. Main cooperation is with the mobile intercultural team, the school psychologists and refugees' contact persons. Often, however, even more time and resources are desirable.

Process: Selection of teaching methods

Selection of teaching methods

Among the often applied teaching methods are exploring future plans, actively involving pupils, promoting their practical skills, team-oriented work, self-responsible learning. There is a strong fit between the teaching methods and the pupils. An integrative learning environment that supports integration and promotes openness and inclusion is implied. Linguistic and vocational/technical education take place interlaced and in alternation.

Output: Assessment of learning progress/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market/ Absence and dropout rate

Assessment of learning progress

Evaluation makes use of formal assessment and teacher feedback, as well as of self-assessment as an important tool. Recommendations for improvement, a focus on progress and resources and an open approach to mistakes are a part of everyday school life. 'Can' descriptions (the student can...) and no deficit-orientation are also important. Structure is just as important as openness, as psychological stress can often hinder learning progress. The aim is to enable pupils to attend higher schools.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

The aim is to assist with the nostrification and translation of previously earned certificates. This can be done directly online at the homepage of the Ministry of Education. For every certification, an equivalent training (e.g. high school graduation in Country x = 7th grade upper level in Austria) has to be found. In this context, cooperation is being established between the Centre for Migrants (ZEMIT and the Ministry of Education.

Absence and dropout rate

The dropout rate is about 20%. The main reasons for dropping out are legal and personal factors, trauma, psychological stress, insecure living conditions, lack of agreement between pre-qualifications and level of training etc. Other reasons for dropping out include a lack of a good level of training. In order to reduce the dropout rate, it is important to train teachers more specifically to understand the pupils' previous qualifications, to activate support systems and to pay attention to the composition of the class as well as the school culture.

Ausbilderforum Tirol

General description

For 20 years, Ausbilderforum Tirol has been active in the spheres of further training and apprentice trainer networking. As a train-the-trainer programme, the Ausbilderforum Tirol is an important institution in the dual training system and one that is indirectly concerned with the subject of refugees in apprenticeships. Its objectives are further training of and support for apprentice trainers, networking and experience exchange, qualification within the ‘further training passport for apprentice trainers’ framework, awarding of the ‘certified apprentice trainer’ prize, promotion of regional and supra-regional cooperation in training matters, fostering contact between companies and vocational schools and strengthening the image and identity of apprentice trainers. As a service centre for all who are involved and interested in improving the quality of apprenticeship training, Ausbilderforum continues to develop into becoming a future platform.

The offers of Ausbilderforum are aimed at employees of companies who plan, carry out and monitor apprenticeship training. Ausbilderforum is an initiative for all persons involved in in-company apprenticeship training. Apprenticeship training has changed greatly in recent years and decades. In addition to specialist knowledge, personal and social skills, as well as attitudes towards life, learning and work are becoming increasingly important. The trainers' forum (Ausbilderforum) supports apprentice trainers in meeting these challenges. In addition to an annual further training programme on current topics, tailor-made training courses, further training passport and *the diplomierte/r Lehrlingsausbilder/in* (certified apprenticeship trainer) award, there is also a focus on networking activities and experience exchange. Themes in the courses also deal with the topic of refugees in apprenticeship training, including diversity in working life, apprentice diversity as an opportunity, courage for diversity in apprenticeship training, why it is worthwhile to train refugees, sensitisation measures, etc. There are trainers' congresses, regulars' tables, public relations work, coaching groups and more.

Link: <https://www.amg-tirol.at/content/Ausbilderforum>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Learning goals and content/ Support system and coordination/Access and entrance requirements/ Sustainable demand on the training programme

Learning goals and content

The instructor forum itself has a flexible course programme, which is sent out annually. The training plans for apprentices in individual occupations are regularly discussed during training courses. All trainers are trained on how the official and internal training plans could be implemented (feedback loops, fulfilling all training objectives, how to take young people with them, staff appraisals, etc.).

Support system and coordination

There is, for instance, the possibility to attend an apprentice coaching called ‘apprenticeship instead of emptiness’ (*Lehre statt Leere*) and free coaching for training companies. The trainers learn that they do not have to deal with all problematic situations themselves but that they have to recognise problems and react to them accordingly. In the Ausbilderforum courses, for example, they should learn to turn to suitable bodies—such as Kontakt und Co, the training association of the Chamber of Commerce, etc.—for help. Knowledge about social institutions and support services should also be built. The trainers' forum passes on when the trainers can turn to where if support is needed. The trainer cannot solve all psycho-social problems himself/herself, but he/she can know where to turn. The trainers' knowledge of support systems

and social services tends to be thin. This puts a lot of pressure on them because they feel they have to solve everything themselves. Hence, a coaching round was initiated in which trainers can participate in small-scale 'case counselling' scenarios, where current cases in apprenticeship training can be discussed. There is one group per year with 4–6 scheduled meetings.

Access and entrance requirements

The training forum itself is largely aimed at trained trainers. There is an impression that access to teaching for refugees very often happens on a personal level and is made possible by personal contacts. A concrete, goal-oriented access of the group to enterprises cannot be observed.

Sustainable demand on training programme

The trainers' forum always focuses on what the companies and trainers ask for and need. Topics can also be chosen dynamically—for example, there are course offers on topics of digitization, non-violent communication, interculturality, diversity, diversity in working life, apprentice diversity as an opportunity, courage for diversity in apprenticeship training, why it is worthwhile to train refugees, sensitization measures, etc. The training forum is always oriented towards what companies and trainers demand and need.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

Interculturality plays an important role in what courses are offered. Problematic topics can be quite banal at first glance; for example, there is a snack in the company but, for religious reasons, not everyone can enjoy it. How do you deal with this situation? As mentioned above, there are various different courses available.

Selection of teaching methods

The role of the trainers has changed a lot; in addition to their specialist training, they must also be trained in didactics and pedagogy. The trainers are not prepared for this role and the trainers' forum tries to close this gap across all sectors. The aim of the trainer forum is to improve the training in the sphere of apprenticeship training. Discussions are held with trainers about where they work together and where the company stands and on this basis the didactics are worked out—for example, mistakes are a part of learning. The work is always conducted in small groups. The aim is to support the trainers in their role as vocational educators.

Output: Absence and dropout rate

Absence and dropout rate

When companies train apprentices and the latter then receive a negative decision from a determining authority or have their residence permit revoked, this often poses a huge issue and can lead to dropouts.

Best practices in Denmark

Training refugees and increasing the diversity in cleaning services

General description

Jobs in cleaning services are often directly accessible for refugees with low skill levels, however, these can be 'dead-end jobs' with few opportunities for career development or skill upgrades. These jobs traditionally represent low-skilled and low-status types of female work, which have weak trade unions and employ many of non-western migrants. However, work in this field can also provide a well-organised, permanent and full-time skilled job with opportunities for career development for ethnic minorities and refugees. A good example of how VET for refugees in this field can be organised is demonstrated by the International Service System (ISS) company in cooperation with multiple other actors. Their activities include validation of prior learning, pre-vocational training, mentoring and cross-company cooperation on the training of refugees.

Professional cleaning has become a big business, as a key component of what is called 'facility services', which includes business cleaning, catering, reception, security, kitchen and property services. These services comprise an expanding employment field, which is now covered by vocational education and training programmes in the Danish VET system. The initiative to establish these VET programmes came from labour market organisations because they wanted to raise the quality and the status of cleaning work, both for the customers and the employees.

ISS, a Danish-based transnational company, has more than 7,000 employees in this sector in Denmark. The company pursues a strategy to deliver high quality specialised services that depends on the skills and the commitment of its employees. Cleaning services do not appear to be very attractive for Danish youth and, consequently, around half of the ISS staff has a foreign background. In Denmark, the company currently employs people from more than one hundred different countries. In its people management and recruitment policy, ISS has turned this ethnic and cultural diversity of the staff into an advantage. The company pursues an explicit diversity policy as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy, including refugees.

In the wake of the large refugee influx in 2015, the company became involved in a national summit organised by the government to engage labour market organisations in refugee integration. Since then, the company has placed around 500 refugees in job training placements, either in its own divisions or with other cooperating employers. Continuing this practice, the company organised the first Basic Integration Programme (IGU) for 12 refugees in its branch in the town Kalundborg in 2017. The programme was designed in cooperation with the trade union for this occupation.

Link: <http://www.sus-udd.dk/wp-content/uploads/6132-AUI-booklet-web.pdf>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Learning goals and content/ Access and entrance requirements/ Support system and coordination

Sustainable demand on the training programme

Building on more than 20 years' experiences, the company established a separate branch, ISS CSR & Job Development, which specialises in inclusion, training and support activities in order to improve the

employment of marginalised people. This branch works as a mediator between the municipalities, the job centres and other companies that contribute to the inclusion and training of persons at the margins of the labour market. In 2017, more than 1,800 people were thus activated in some kind of job training or education programme and 80% of them completed the programme they attended. The training activities involve a large network of more than 1,000 collaborating firms. One example of this is a manufacturing company, which is owned by a fund that has a mission to provide social support for local communities. This company took responsibility for training a Syrian refugee, who was employed by ISS and posted there in collaboration with a local job centre. He began an internship in ISS and learned cleaning services and the Danish language. Subsequently, he gained an ordinary job in ISS as a service assistant. In this manner, ISS uses its specialised knowledge about social inclusion and work-oriented rehabilitation and takes the formal responsibility for refugees, while a collaborating company provides them with training opportunities.

Learning goals and content

According to the legal framework for the Basic Integration Programme (IGU), the definition of the learning goals is left to the individual employers and the refugees. However, ISS cooperates with the trade union on this and the programme has a broader scope than firm-specific qualifications. The school-based part of the programme combines language training with standard modules from the national continuing VET system (AMU). These modules have high validity in the labour market and they improve the employability of the attending refugees. The modules are distributed evenly over a two-year training period. Like other apprenticeship programmes, the organisation of the IGU programme has alternating periods of school-based and work-based training. This supports the connection between theory and work practice for the participants. During the school-based periods, half of the day is dedicated to vocational training and the other half to Danish language training in relation to the occupational field. The curriculum includes safety knowledge, hygiene and general knowledge, contributing to a sense of occupational pride in cleaning work.

Link: <https://samarbejdsnaevnet.dk/index.php?id=75>.

Access and entrance requirements

It is quite difficult for refugees to gain access to the ordinary Danish VET system for various reasons. First, the Danish language entrance requirement presents a barrier—even for native Danish youth. Second, as the Danish VET system is based on apprenticeships, the students must acquire a training contract with an employer. Third, most refugees have a qualification handicap because they are not acquainted with the standards of Danish working life concerning strict time structures, high quality standards, communication, self-management, etc. Fourth, refugees have limited knowledge about the opportunities and conditions of the numerous occupations covered by the VET system. They find it difficult to make a qualified choice of a vocational programme that matches their interests and abilities. Due to these barriers, well-organised and lengthy preparatory training programmes are required, for most refugees, before they are ready to successfully take up an ordinary Danish VET programme. ISS has developed a pre-vocational programme for all refugees aspiring towards the two-year Basic Integration Programme, IGU. Before starting in the preparatory programme, their prior learning and interests are assessed. ISS offers an early validation of refugees' prior learning while they are still in the asylum centres and before they transfer to the municipalities. After being located in a municipality, they can attend a 15-week preparatory programme in which they take part in assessment interviews, school-based training and job training in a workplace while working with ordinary employees. During the training, they gain experiences with the opportunities and the requirements of the jobs in this field. Through assessments, their prior learning and motivation is examined to ensure that a good match is made between the refugees and their vocational programmes. In the first course, ISS had 32 participants in their preparatory programme, of which 16 continued on to the IGU. More than half of those who did not continue to the IGU, subsequently attained employment in unskilled jobs.

ISS emphasises that preparatory pre-vocational training is necessary for a good company–refugee match and for high refugee VET completion rates.

Support system and coordination

All the refugees trained in ISS have a mentor who supports them in managing various challenges throughout the programme. The mentors are prepared for the task through an in-company job mentor programme. The mentor can be a supervisor or an experienced colleague who guides, trains and supports a refugee during the integration process. The mentor also acts as a role model and an advisor for a refugee. Mentoring is seen as key to a fast and successful inclusion of refugees in companies and in the social workplace community. Mentors can facilitate smooth integration and effective refugee training. The municipal job centres can give financial support for in-company mentors. A mentor has daily contact with a refugee during the training to make sure that questions and difficulties are taken care of at an early stage, before they grow large and result in a conflict or in dropping out of the internship.

Process: Finance and funding

Finance and funding

The municipalities have the main financial responsibility for refugee integration. The refunding system gives them strong incentives to quickly place refugees into employment. ISS CSR & Job Development closely collaborates with more than 30 municipal job centres, which fund the activities of the company in terms of preparing, training and guiding refugees so they can get access to the labour market. The company pays apprenticeship wages to the refugees in the IGU programme and receives a financial benefit from the state for each participant. In this way, the IGU scheme shares the costs of training among all the main stakeholders. In a specific IGU project with Kalundborg Municipality, the integration service provided by ISS represents an extension of the existing relations between the municipality as a customer and ISS as a private service provider.

Output: Absence and dropout rate

Absence and dropout rate

Due to the mentor programme and the good collaboration between all stakeholders involved, the dropout rate in the preparatory programmes is low. In contrast, the non-completion rate in the first Basic Integration Programme (IGU) organised by ISS is high despite of the mentor scheme. In the first IGU programme, only five out of sixteen participants remained until the end. However, most of this is seen as a ‘positive drop out’ by the job centres, because the participants who terminate their IGU shift into ordinary employment. Most of the participants are eager to become economically self-reliant and prefer to replace the low IGU wage with an ordinary wage. Students who interrupt their IGU programme do receive a certificate for the modules they have completed in the adult further training system (AMU).

Midtvask—Refugees' pathway to an ordinary VET programme

General description

Ethnic minority employees comprise a large share of the staff at a large laundry company, Midtvask. For this group, the company established a tailored vocational education and training (VET) programme six years ago, which includes Danish language learning. The programme combines on-the-job training, school-based training and Danish language learning, both in school and in the workplace. The skill requirements in the laundry industry are increasing due to higher quality standards and automation. Forecasts predict a coming shortage of skilled workers and the company is concerned about its future recruitment opportunities to obtain qualified employees. Hence, it is also engaged in the training and education of refugees.

In 2013, the company established the first VET programme for employees by integrating Danish language training in collaboration with a vocational college. Since then, two more courses have been organised with great success and, in 2018, around half of the 180 employees have successfully completed this VET programme. The completion rate in the programme is very high (95%). In 2017, the company's VET programme was extended to include refugees.

By including refugees into the company's training scheme, Midtvask gave them the opportunity to become skilled workers with very good prospects for future employment either within their company or in other firms. The training scheme is organised with procedures for careful preparation and selection of participants in order to increase their chances of success. Midtvask received the integration prize of the Danish Refugee Council in 2016. Link to the project (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vhul6gF6QLs>) includes details about the visit of the UN High Commissioner to learn about this refugee integration project.

The training of refugees at Midtvask stands out because of several distinctive qualities. First, it has a long-term perspective that allows refugees to progress from preparatory training through the Basic Integration Programme (IGU) to an ordinary VET programme. Second, it includes a close collaboration between six companies, a vocational college, a provider of language training and numerous municipal job centres. The success of the project is attributed to good coordination between all these actors. Third, the training of the refugees is combined with the training of the company's ordinary employees, which is a great advantage for the refugee integration process.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Access and entrance requirements/ Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Support system and coordination

Access and entrance requirements

Due to the entrance requirements, it is difficult for refugees to access the Danish VET system. To be admitted, the refugees must have attained at least the 02 grade (equivalent to English grade E) in math and Danish in the lower secondary school final examination. To succeed in an internship, refugees must further be acquainted with the workplace culture in Denmark. In addition, they must be prepared to make a qualified choice of a specific VET programme. Consequently, refugees often need a lengthy process of preparation before they can get access to and complete an ordinary VET programme. It is a distinctive feature of the refugee training scheme at Midtvask that it has organised this preparatory process in three consecutive steps. It starts with preparatory training, continues with the special IGU programme for refugees and ends with an ordinary VET programme. Not all participants go through all the steps, as they have a total duration of four to five years.

In the first step, three months in duration, refugees are employed in part-time internships, where they work in the company and, at the same time, attend intensive language training classes in the workplace. This internship period gives both the company and the participant an opportunity to decide on their further mutual engagement. In the second step, refugees are employed as apprentices in the special two-year VET programme for refugees—the Basic Integration Programme, IGU. When a refugee takes up an IGU programme, they sign an employment contract and a training agreement with the company and a written training plan is laid out. This plan includes 20 weeks of school-based courses in addition to one and a half years of on-the-job training in the workplace under mentor supervision. The school-based courses include technical-vocational subjects, general subjects and Danish language training. The participants receive a wage from the company and a certificate from the vocational school when they complete the programme. In the third step, refugees can begin the ordinary two-year VET programme for industrial operators together with ordinary employees from Midtvas and other companies.

Sustainable demand on the training programme

The close cooperation between six companies and the municipalities involved ensured a high demand for this VET programme for refugees. It is a serious challenge to organise VET for refugees because the number of refugees in specific municipalities or industries is too low to fill a whole course and, consequently, to finance the training. When refugees are granted a residence permit, they are distributed evenly in municipalities all over the country. Refugees represent quite a heterogeneous group (age, prior education, abilities, interests, etc). This is in contrast to the need for homogeneity among the participants in VET courses to make the training efficient. Midtvas could not, on its own, gather enough participants for a special course for refugees based on the model that was developed previously for its ordinary employees. The company had to engage other companies in order to accomplish this goal.

In 2015, the company got five other regional companies involved in a common training project, which also included a vocational college and a specialised language learning institution. All six companies have a high engagement in the training and education of their employees. In addition, they are concerned about the future recruitment of skilled labour. By joining their resources, these companies could organise a tailored two-year programme for refugees.

Support system and coordination

To secure the continued commitment of all the stakeholders involved, a strategic network was established that had regular meetings between HR managers and other key persons in these companies every two to three months. This was essential for dealing with some of the problems that arose in the process, prior to them becoming critical. In addition, the project had the opportunity to engage a senior Midtvas employee as a coordinator, who could take care of many emerging issues for the refugees. This coordinator supported the refugees on questions related to financial or legal problems, transport, family care and contact with other professionals. It was also a great advantage for cooperation that relations of mutual trust had been established between the vocational college, the language learning institution and Midtvas during the period from 2013 until the refugees became included in 2016.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

In this project, the companies combined the training of refugees with the training of other employees. In this way, they considerably improved the refugees' Danish language learning and their cultural learning. This way of organising the programme also helped solve a staffing problem for the companies involved. When companies want to upgrade the skills of their employees, they face the challenge of staffing the

production process while some of the employees are away on school-based training. This can cause severe problems for middle managers and co-workers. Midtvask and the other cooperating companies managed this challenge through an innovative organisational model. For each ordinary employee who started the VET programme, the companies took on a refugee who could replace this employee. Each company formed two small teams, consisting of one Danish employee and one refugee. The two team members participated in the VET programme together. When they went off to the vocational college for training, they were replaced by another team in the workplace. Thus, the total workforce was kept stable as the two teams took turns attending the course and attending work. This model improved the opportunity for social learning and inclusion of refugees.

Selection of teaching methods

Refugees benefit from work-based learning, where oral instructions are combined with practical demonstrations of skills. Refugees also need school-based education to improve their general competences. However, it can be a great challenge for the VET students to connect learning in a school-based setting to the practices in the workplace. This is especially a problem in programmes in which the participants are away from the workplace in longer periods. The Midtvask training project included two features that addressed this problem. First, the refugees and the other employees did not participate in the programme alone but in pairs. As two employees went off together on the same course, it was easier for them to transfer what they had learned to their workplace afterwards. Second, the VET programme was organised with only short periods of school-based learning, typically one week in duration. The frequent shifts between work-based and school-based learning made it easier for the participants to connect off-the-job training with the daily practices in the workplace. In addition, the supervisors in the workplace were prepared to facilitate the employees' learning transfer from the external course to the workplace environment.

Output: Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

When completing the VET programme in the company, refugees must pass a final examination in order to receive a journeyman's certificate. The certificate is recognised across sub-branches and the current unemployment rate is very low for graduates from this programme (1% in 2018). This indicates that the programme provides a broad set of basic skills that match the current industry requirements. The company's training scheme is based on the ordinary two-year VET programme for an industrial operator, which provides a broad set of skills for automated process industries (food, chemical, plastics, etc.). This programme is established and managed by the national trade committee, where employers and trade unions cooperate to manage and develop the VET programmes for this industry. The programme is recognised by the state and is part of the national VET system and it includes standardised curricula, exams and procedures for quality control. By acquiring a skilled workers certificate, refugees significantly increase their employment opportunities in comparison to refugees who achieve only firm-specific skills in work-based training. In addition, when refugees complete the training programme, they are likely to gain employment in the training company because recruitment is the main driver for the companies' engagement.

Training refugees to become bus drivers

General description

The VET programme for bus drivers is identified as good practice because it provides a fast track to permanent employment for most of its refugee students. In Denmark, most bus drivers are trained in the comprehensive, publicly funded adult education and further training system (AMU), organised by public and private providers. The school company UCplus is one of these educational providers for the transport sector with a national coverage. It has close connections to companies and labour market organisations in the sector and good access to training placements in bus companies. Many of the participants in the VET programmes at UCplus are not native Danish citizens and the institution has developed extensive experience with the training of students for whom Danish is a second language. Building on this expertise, UCplus established a separate Danish Language Training Centre in 2007, which is located close to the vocational transport training centre. It gained official accreditation to provide most standard certificates in Danish language. Here, Danish language can be organised with a special focus on the standards of correct language for the transport occupations. In addition, combined and integrated training of language and technical subjects are offered. In response to the influx of refugees, UCplus established a two-year vocational Basic Integration Programme (IGU) to train refugees to become bus drivers. The IGU programme is based on modules from the VET system for adults (AMU), which provides a large variety of shorter and flexible courses aiming at unemployed and employed persons. The modules include courses for driving licence, customer service and public transportation. In addition, intensive learning of the Danish language and culture is included in the first six months of the two-year IGU programme.

Link: <https://ucplus.dk/kommuner-busselskaber-har-succes-faa-flygtninge-job-buschauffoer/>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Access and entrance requirements

Access and entrance requirements

The IGU programme for bus driver has proven to be very successful in placing refugees into ordinary employment situations. This is partly due to the careful pre-admission assessment and testing of applicants for the programme. This procedure ensures that only refugees who meet the admission requirements are admitted to the programme. As the teaching in the VET modules of the IGU programme is conducted in the Danish language, refugees must have a good level of language before they are admitted to the IGU programme. In addition, to become a bus driver in Denmark, refugees must be above the age of 21 and have a clean criminal record. A doctor must agree that they fulfil certain minimum requirements regarding health and physical abilities and they must have acquired an ordinary Danish driving licence.

The bus driver programme appears quite attractive for many refugees because it provides a fast track to permanent and secure employment. Therefore, the programme has many applicants. Every month an information and assessment session is organised for potential applicants. Here, they are informed about the programme affordances and requirements and their skills are assessed by a driving instructor. Their motivation and competences are screened to assess their chances of completing the programme.

In the IGU bus driver programme, refugees attend normal classes together with other non-refugee students during the first six-month school-based period. As this is very intensive and demanding, it could result in high non-completion rates. To increase the retention of the students, the educational provider, UCplus, has established a preparatory course in occupational Danish language and culture. It has a flexible duration of

six to nine weeks, tailored to individual requirements. Besides language training, the refugees participate in preparatory training for chauffeur and technical skills to improve their chances of completing the subsequent IGU-programme. It strengthens the engagement of students that the preparatory course takes place at the training centre for bus drivers.

Due to the thorough assessment of refugees by the educational provider prior to admission, the bus companies trust the quality of the students and provide training placements without reluctance. The companies benefit from the IGU programme because they receive well-trained and highly motivated employees in a situation where these are in short supply. A weakness of the programme is that very few women apply, mainly due to cultural norms and the gendered division of labour in families.

Sustainable demand on the training programme

Major bus companies are experiencing a growing shortage of trained drivers and a declining number of applicants for their job advertisements. The training centre for public transport, UCplus, has also seen a decreasing interest for the bus driver VET programme. Consequently, the bus driver programme is on the government's list of 'privileged programmes' that have certain advantages in order to attract more students. This situation has made the VET programme for bus driver a very good opportunity for refugees who seek permanent employment. However, working as a bus driver involves considerably more than just a driving license for buses. It requires high quality customer service and good skills in communication, technical maintenance, safety knowledge and competences in time planning, writing work reports and self-management. The IGU programme for refugees has been designed in cooperation with employers and includes all the core skills required to gain employment after completion.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

The transport sector employs a large group of immigrants and two thirds of the employees in the capital's public transport services are of foreign origin. The sector is characterised by high cultural diversity and, therefore, it is very common that employees have Danish as their second language. This makes it easier for refugees to become included in these multi-ethnic workplace communities. The social composition of the students in the UCplus training centre mirrors the sector by representing a large variety of ethnic minorities. The training centre promotes an inclusive learning environment and the refugees in this IGU programme are not very different from students in other programmes.

Similar to other educational providers, UCplus faces a dilemma in relation to religious practices on the premises of the institution. In order to increase the inclusiveness and diversity of the learning environment, the institution could accept such practices. However, such practices could also strengthen cultural separatism among the students in the centre. When institutions encourage cultural diversity, they can inadvertently promote cultural and religious divisions and skirmishes. The goal of the language-training centre is primarily to prepare the students to become integrated in the secular Danish workplace culture. Besides, it wants to prevent cultural and religious tensions at the centre. Accordingly, the training centre is held to be a non-religious space. The learning environment is organised to mirror the social norms of an ordinary workplace in Denmark, which typically has no room for religious practices. However, such practices are not sanctioned as long as they do not dominate or interfere with the training activities.

The IGU programme includes general issues that can promote the students' active participation in the Danish labour market and in society. The occupational training is combined with Danish language training so that the students can learn the occupational language and the specific terms used in the field. Much of the existing teaching resources for the bus driver programme employ a very formal language (used in

instructions, legal regulations, etc.), which is distant from the language spoken in workplaces. Hence, the teachers in the IGU programme develop their own teaching resources, adapted to students who are learning Danish as a second language. In one school, the teachers established a system for sharing these resources—e.g. a list of terms and expressions that were difficult for the students—so that the students could be trained by all teachers.

Selection of teaching methods

Many refugees are raised in a school culture dominated by rote learning and passive individual acquisition of knowledge. To challenge this, the teachers in the bus driver programme encourage self-directed forms of learning with group work, problem solving and active involvement of students. It is a challenge for the teachers that the refugee students are socialised in a school culture that is very different from the culture of Danish schools. For example, some students feel embarrassed about saying that they do not understand something that is being taught. They tend to answer affirmatively when the teachers ask them if they understood the lesson. In addition, some students think that it is the teachers' responsibility that they attain the learning goals and pass the tests. As a result, the teachers in the IGU programme organise frequent small tests to ensure that all students have actually learned what they say they have learned, and they encourage the students to take responsibility for learning what is required to complete the programme.

Output: Absence and dropout rate/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Absence and dropout rate

The refugee students in the programme are motivated by the good chances of obtaining ordinary employment. Consequently, the completion rate is very high in the first six-month school-based period, where the participants acquire their certifications and study applied Danish language. The participants are quite committed because they know that they were selected among many applicants and that they will most likely be offered a job upon completion. By the end of 2018, 55 refugees began, 43 completed and 39 passed all tests in the Aarhus branch of the training centre, continuing in a training placement with a bus company.

While the completion rate is high (around 90%) for the first school-based period, it is lower for the subsequent one and a half years of apprenticeship training. However, a significant part of this is considered to be 'positive drop out'. This is because many refugees terminate the IGU programme because they find employment in ordinary conditions with their bus company. Due to the shortage of bus drivers, the bus companies are eager to recruit potential drivers from the IGU even before they have finished their programme. After a few months of placement with a bus company, many IGU-programme students are offered regular employment with their employers, who fear that the students will be hired by a competing bus company if they do not recruit them first. In other cases, the IGU students are offered an ordinary bus driver's wage for their remaining IGU period. This is more than double the very low 'integration allowance' they normally receive during the programme. While the shift to regular employment is seen as a success by the job centres and the refugees themselves, it has a downside. Refugees could benefit from completing the IGU because this would give them additional vocational and Danish language training and improve their long-term employability. However, some bus companies with many non-native Danish-speaking employees, offer continued Danish language training for all their employees.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

When completing the first school-based part of the programme, the students receive a certification that can provide access to employment with a bus company. When starting the job training at a bus company,

the refugee students receive a uniform, ID-card, etc. When they complete the IGU programme, the training centre, the job centres, the employers and the students' families celebrate it with a graduation ceremony. This is very important for many refugees, who feel recognised as being part of the staff. Some of them also tell that the uniform positively affects how they are treated in public and in the social security office.

The transport sector is known for precarious working conditions with insecure employment, long working hours and low pay. Working conditions in the public bus transport system have also deteriorated because of privatisations and intensification of work. However, jobs in public transport and in large bus companies benefit from quite secure and orderly condition. While other parts of the transport sector are weakly unionised and unregulated, most of the bus drivers are employed in large companies with strong unions and detailed regulations of working conditions, pensions, benefits and wages. For refugees, the IGU programme for bus drivers provides a good opportunity to gain stable and permanent employment.

The Basic Integration Programme for refugees (IGU)

General description

The Basic Integration Programme (IGU, in Danish) is a special state-regulated two-year VET programme designed for refugees and their reunified family members. It was introduced in July 2016, following tripartite negotiations between the government and the main labour market organisations over the refugee crisis. The IGU runs as a pilot project, which was extended for another three years in 2019 (until 2022) because it is considered to be a success.

The IGU is modelled on a special apprenticeship programme for vulnerable Danish youth ('weak learners'), who are unable to complete a regular apprenticeship. Most standard apprenticeships in Denmark have a four-year duration but can be either shorter or longer. The IGU is a two-year programme for refugees and their reunified families, who are between the ages of 18 and 40. They must be in the first stages of the integration process and must not have had a residence permit in Denmark for more than five years when they take up the IGU.

The refugees in the IGU have an employee status and an employment contract with a training company. They are covered by collective agreements and receive wages similar to the other apprentices in the Danish VET system. According to the law, the companies have the main responsibility for initiating an IGU programme and for designing its specific content (language and vocational training). In reality, the municipalities (job centres) generally take the initiative in relation to organising the IGU by finding and coordinating the training companies, the language training centres and the vocational colleges involved.

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

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Learning goals and content/ Access and entrance requirements

Sustainable demand on the training programme

In the years after the IGU programme was introduced, the shortage of skilled labour in the Danish labour market was growing. The supply of skilled workers did not meet the demand and the enrolment of young

people in the Danish VET system was declining for a decade. In addition, the size of the older cohorts of skilled workers exceeded the size of the new cohorts entering the employment system. This explains the employers' support for the IGU programme, as it can help relieve the current and expected labour shortage. In some of the industries, where many IGU programmes have been organised, the employers report a shortage of labour. Therefore, the IGU provides good opportunities for refugees to gain access to the labour market, either directly after completing an IGU programme or after completing an ordinary VET programme.

Learning goals and content

The legal framework for the IGU requires that school-based training must constitute five months (20 weeks) of the two-year programme. A plan for the programme must be created and registered with the Ministry of Employment one month after starting an IGU programme, at the latest. The plan typically includes a combination of language training and vocational training modules in the Danish public further training system ('Arbejdsmarkedssuddannelserne', AMU). These modules can be selected from a variety of modules that are designed for foreigners and have extra Danish language training included along with extended duration. Frequently, these also include modules of general content, such as labour market introduction, information technology, safety and ergonomics. The language training included in these modules aims for specific terms and expressions to be learned that are used at work in a specific occupation. The language training can also be managed by a Danish language school, which must be authorised by the state. The remaining year and a half of the IGU is devoted to work-based training in a workplace, where IGU apprentices participate in regular work tasks under supervision of experienced colleagues.

Before a refugee begins an IGU programme, a curricular plan must be drawn up. The curricular content of a specific IGU can be determined flexibly by the refugee, the educational provider and the company responsible for the IGU apprenticeship. Most often, a job centre and a vocational college take the initiative. While the IGU is modelled on the existing apprenticeship programmes in the Danish VET system, the IGU is not recognised as a regular VET programme. A regular programme has a standardised national curriculum that is defined by labour market organisations of an industry through a trade committee. In contrast, the IGU has an individualised curriculum and is not regulated by trade committees. To assist the local design of IGU-programmes, a variety of model programmes had been drawn up by the trade committees, vocational colleges and organisations of civil society. For example, the Trade Committee for Hospitality and Food has devised nine different IGU programmes for inspiration (<https://uddannelsessekretariatet.dk/amu/igu/>). The programmes include a list of learning goals related to the training modules and recommendations for the structure with alternation between school-based and work-based training.

Access and entrance requirements

A major challenge for vocational colleges is to gather a sufficient number of refugees (volume) to organise classes in the programme. In order to be financially viable, a class in a VET programme must have a minimum number of participants (mostly 12–16). In addition, a minimum level of homogeneity is required in order to make class-based teaching effective and pedagogically meaningful. The participants must be more or less the same level regarding language as well as vocational skills. One viable solution has been to design introductory courses with a broader profile that cover multiple occupational fields so that they can include refugees who will later specialise in different programmes. Another solution is to provide intensive Danish language training before starting an IGU. Subsequently, those refugees that at a more advanced level can attend regular VET classes together with native Danish participants. However, this is only possible for the most ambitious and proficient Danish language learners among the refugees.

In order to start an IGU-programme, a minimum number of participants must be gathered from a local/regional catchment area to fill a class in a specific vocational programme, at a certain level and at a given time. To achieve this requires strong coordination among municipalities, educational providers and employers to offer all refugees a relevant programme. However, this coordination function is not included in the state regulation of the IGU programme and the task has been managed differently in different municipalities and by different employers.

Process: Finance and funding

Finance and funding

The IGU programme is based on a financial model that shares the costs between the state, the municipalities, the employers and the refugees doing the IGU apprenticeship. The state and the municipalities share the expenses for the subsistence of the IGU apprentices during their school-based training in the form of an educational allowance. The state grants a subsidy to the employers (approximately 5,000 Euro) for providing the IGU apprenticeship. The employers pay wages to the IGU apprentices while they are in work-based training. The wages for the IGU apprentices are set by labour market organisations for each particular industry and vary somewhat between industries and sectors. The training costs for the educational providers are refunded by the state in accordance with the normal procedures for activity based funding. While this financial model has tried to strike a sustainable balance for all, it has demonstrated two weaknesses. One for the vocational colleges and another for the refugees in the IGU programme. The challenges for the vocational colleges, which lie in gathering enough participants for a programme, have been described above.

For the refugees, the wage level of the IGU programme starts well below half the minimum wage amount for skilled adults. This low wage level has contributed to giving IGU programmes a low status, especially among adult refugees. When they start as IGU apprentices, they typically have additional expenses—for example, transport—and this can make it very difficult for them to sustain their personal economy. Consequently, financial problems are among the most common reasons why refugees terminate their IGU programmes before completion. Some employers increase the wage level in order to retain the IGU apprentices. Other employers offer the IGU apprentices a regular job and a regular wage to retain them as employees.

Output: Absence and dropout rate/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Absence and dropout rate

The non-completion rate for refugees in the IGU-programme is around 30%, including students who do not start in a planned programme. A variety of reasons for non-completion have been identified and many different ways of organising the IGU programmes have been tried out. From these practical experiences, some recommendations for good practice are suggested here:

1. *A good match.* Refugees most often drop out due to ‘lack of motivation’. Before starting an IGU-programme, a refugee must be carefully matched with a programme and company. As most refugees have little knowledge of the Danish labour market and specific occupations available, they can benefit from trying out opportunities in the occupational fields under consideration. Through shorter internships, both

refugees and employers can get to know each other and align mutual expectations, and the refugees can become acquainted with the culture of the Danish work life.

2. *An appropriate wage level.* A frequent reason for terminating the programme is lack of economic incentives. The low wage level for IGU apprentices makes some feel exploited and leads to them losing their engagement. The low official IGU wage gives the refugees an incentive to drop out and shift into regular unskilled employment before completing a programme. In some cases, the employer offers the IGU apprentice a regular employment contract before the completion of the programme to prevent the apprentice from shifting to regular employment with another employer.

3. *The right level.* Mismatch between the refugees' skills and the work skill requirements is another frequent reason for dropping out. A thorough validation of the refugees' prior learning and their technical, social and language skills can improve the match between the skill levels of refugees and the requirements of jobs and vocational courses. In school-based learning, an appropriate level of Danish language skills is decisive for the refugees' opportunities to benefit from education.

4. *Preventing conflicts.* Disagreements in the workplace can arise when nobody is aware of cultural or language misunderstandings. If employers and refugees have access to an external mentor or counsellor, small disagreements can be settled before they grow into irresolvable conflicts that result in the dropout or dismissal of refugees.

5. *Prepare and involve the employees.* In work-based training, good relations with colleagues are vital for the well-being of the IGU apprentices. To improve the chances of refugees' social integration, all other staff should be informed and involved before refugees arrives. The employees can, for instance, draw up schemes for shared training responsibilities, as well as create a buddy system and agreements on support for transport, working time, etc.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

When refugees (or reunified family members) complete an IGU programme, they are awarded a diploma that describes the content of the training they have completed. In addition, they receive certificates for the individual training modules they have completed in the public further training system (AMU) if they have attained its learning goals. If they have not attained all learning goals, they receive a certificate for participation in the module. The content of the modules is defined in collaboration with labour market organisations for each industry and are widely recognised in the labour market.

The IGU-programmes are mostly organised in industries in which many jobs have medium and low levels of skill requirements. They comprise green houses, agriculture, cleaning, hospitality, food, transportation and retail. These industries have many precarious jobs with low quality of work (insecure employment, odd hours, low wages, little autonomy, etc.). However, they also offer employment opportunities for refugees with limited Danish language skills and shorter periods of job training. Also, even these industries can offer employment with reasonable quality and pay. Generally, the Danish labour market is highly regulated and well organised with low levels of dualisation. Similar to other apprenticeships, most of the training in an IGU programme takes place in workplaces. The apprentices are socialised into working life and integrated into the labour market during their training. They build social networks and become acquainted with the informal channels for distribution of job offers.

In addition, it is a noteworthy quality of an IGU programme that participants are entitled to membership in an unemployment insurance fund after programme completion. This gives them the right to receive unemployment benefits that are not means tested, in contrast to social security and the 'integration allowance'. This brings them closer to core membership in the labour market.

Targeted industry programmes organised by the municipality

General description

When refugees are granted asylum, the responsibility for their housing, subsistence, employment and training is transferred to municipalities. Roskilde Municipality has given this responsibility high political priority and has launched several successful training projects for refugees and their families. Following the large influx of refugees in 2015, Roskilde Municipality rapidly initiated new training measures for refugees in cooperation with private companies and educational providers. A key objective of these measures is to provide employment opportunities for refugees. These training measures are termed 'targeted industry programmes' and are now used by almost all municipalities. This is related to a 2016 reform of the Integration Act, which gave the municipalities strong financial incentives to help refugees rapidly enter employment, work-based training or education. Targeted industry programmes are created to support this aim, such as retail, kitchen and food, cleaning and laundering, warehouse and logistics and childcare. The targeted industry programmes can be organised very flexibly for individual industries but are based on some common principles. They are aimed at the group of refugees with little or no formal education beyond compulsory school, which comprises around half of all refugees and their reunified families in Denmark. The programmes are targeted industries with good employment opportunities for foreigners with low levels of education. The programmes are short (6–12 months) and give priority to job training, Danish language training and shorter VET modules from the adult further training system (AMU). The aim of the programmes is to achieve ordinary employment or to continue in VET, through a Basic Integration programme (IGU), for example.

Two examples of these programmes from the Roskilde Municipality are included here: one for the hospitality sector and one for the transport sector. This municipality has established long-term cooperation with a large hotel and conference centre, the BC Hospitality Group. The company has a strong CSR policy, which promotes diversity and social inclusion and considers sustainability to be a competitive advantage. In 2018, the company was awarded the Copenhagen business prize for CSR and sustainability. The company sees refugees as a potential resource to cover the future employee demand. The long-term cooperation between the municipality and this company is one of the keys to the success of the programmes. It has enabled a mutual adaptation of expectations and the development of open dialogue and trust between the partners.

Link: <http://uim.dk/filer/nyheder-2018/integrationskit.pdf>.

Roskilde Municipality's training programme for the *transport* sector represents another example of a targeted industry programme for refugees. Currently, the transport sector has a high demand for well-trained truck drivers. The municipality has initiated a training and integration project for this sector in cooperation with nine private transport companies and an employment agency, which train and supply drivers to the transport sector. In addition, the cooperation includes an independent non-profit language training company, and a private provider of vocational education and training in the field of transportation.

Link: <https://dit-roskilde.dk/2018/03/flygtninge-i-chauffoerskole/>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Learning goals and content/ Support system and coordination/ Access and entrance requirements

Sustainable demand on the training programme

Targeted industry programmes are aimed at local industries with good employment opportunities for refugees. These are industries that offer many jobs with low skill requirements, which are accessible for foreigners with limited formal education. Most refugees are eager to become economically independent and recognised as active members of society. It is important for their engagement that their training provides good chances for employment. This is also important for the municipalities that bear the financial burden of supporting refugees. The targeted industry programmes teach relevant and specific skills and have proved to be quite effective in bringing refugees into the labour market in the growth period after 2016.

While targeted industries have many job openings, they also include many temporary and precarious jobs, where the refugees would be in an exposed position the next time a downturn hits. The programmes involve a risk of placing the refugees in ‘dead end jobs’ that offer few chances for skill or career development. However, even low-skilled jobs can provide the stepping-stones for a career into more skilled and secure employment occupations. In these jobs, the refugees can develop their Danish language skills, extend their vocational skills and acquire broader social networks. For all newcomers to this labour market, the greatest challenge is to gain access to the first ordinary job. This is what the targeted industry programmes offer to refugees. Once they have passed this first threshold, usually the access to the next job is easier. The employment prospects for the transport sector and the hospitality sector are bright, as both foresee a growing demand for labour in the years ahead. The cooperation between BC Hospitality Group and the municipality continues and, in 2019, it involves the recruitment and training of a significant number of refugees for the hotels’ staff expansion. In the transportation programme, refugees acquire a truck driver certificate and extensive work experience, both of which provide good chances for employment in a sector with a growing labour shortage.

Learning goals and content

Targeted industry programmes are organised in a ‘step-by-step’ model with increasing learning goals. The typical programme starts with a broad introductory course in which the refugees are introduced to the opportunities and requirements of different types of jobs. This improves the refugees’ capacity to make a qualified choice and tests their abilities in relation to the skill requirements of a particular industry. During the course, the competences of the students are assessed and they are introduced to the labour market system and the work life culture in Denmark. The next steps involve periods of job training combined with language training and alternating with training modules in the adult further training system (AMU). For each targeted industry programme, a set of specific learning goals has been identified (described in a ‘qualification map’). These qualification maps are used to measure the progression of the refugees during the programme, from the introductory levels through the basic levels and to the specific skill levels. The programmes combine periods of school-based training with periods of work-based job training and Danish language training in progressing steps. During the programme, the refugees shift from part-time job training in unpaid internships to full-time supported employment, with the aim of being ready for full time employment under ordinary conditions after the last internship period. The length and number of internships differ, depending on the progression of the individual refugee.

Roskilde Municipality’s *hospitality* programme was organised as a ‘Job School’ for 29 refugees, initially. It involved six months of Danish language training in workplaces, combined with job training in three fields of

work: kitchen, technical service and facility service. In the first initiative, 18 of the participants completed the programme and 10 of them gained employment in the company—7 in the Basic Integration Programme (IGU). The company appreciates that the programme makes a highly committed and dedicated group of employees available to them. All refugees have a mentor assigned to support their progress during the programme. After completion, the municipality provides safeguarding measures to improve the refugees' employment retention (mentoring, counselling).

Roskilde Municipality's *transport* programme included training modules in the adult education and training system (AMU) combined with Danish language training, which is tailored to the transport sector and focuses on learning applied everyday language. It is called 'rapid transportation language', indicating that it is intensive and emphasise the specific vocabulary required for drivers. The participants receive intensive language training integrated with vocational training, and this vocational training is organised with one teacher using the Arabic language and others using the Danish language. The organisation of this targeted industry programme is based on the partnership with a provider of language training, whose teachers have developed acquaintance with the sector's occupational language. The third partner in the training project is a training provider that is also a temporary work agency for the sector. This company organises work-based training for refugees in collaboration with the transportation companies involved. The vocational curriculum includes both national and European legal regulation of transportation, including safety regulations, social requirements and labour market organisation.

Support system and coordination

The core element of the targeted industry programmes is job training in work-based internships. Internships can be very challenging for refugees who have a limited knowledge of the Danish language and Danish work life culture. Therefore, guidance, support systems and mentoring are crucial for successful internships. In the hospitality programme, the hotel company's mentor scheme is important for the retention of refugees during the programme. All refugees have a mentor who is an employee from the current department or the work team. In collaboration with the supervisor, this mentor monitors and supports a refugee's well-being. In addition, a person from the HR-division supervises and supports the implementation of the mentoring and internship procedures. Other co-workers take part in the technical training of the refugees and the mentor supports the refugee's inclusion into the informal workplace communities. The mentor is also available for support and advice on diverse refugee problems in relation to building a life in a new country.

However, some of these problems go beyond the capacity of the workplace mentors. Therefore, the Roskilde Municipality has posted two employees, a social worker and a project manager, to work full time as mentors in the hotels that train refugees. Here, they are nearby and easily available for both the supervisors and the refugees in internships. Their presence and frequent contact with the refugees prevent small challenges from growing into big problems. Previously, the company experienced a lack of support from other municipalities once the refugees had begun their internships. Additionally, the company finds it difficult to identify which section of a municipality is responsible for different problems. The mentor scheme organised by Roskilde Municipality deals with these challenges. The mentors assist with all sorts of problems and take responsibility for contacting other professionals if required. The municipal mentors can assist in the resolution of problems concerning family, personal economy, housing, transport, medical assistance and so on, which could endanger the refugees' participation in the programme. In addition, the municipal project manager speaks Arabic and provides help with interpretation in case of language problems.

Access and entrance requirements

A key to a successful VET integration programme is to achieve the right match between the participating refugees and the programme. In order to ensure that the interests and capacities of the refugees match the requirements of the integration programme, the Roskilde Municipality has set up detailed guidelines for this process. When refugees arrive, they go through a process of screening as well as prior learning and current competences validation. This includes all kinds of formal education and certification, language skills, informal learning and work experiences, physical abilities and the refugees' preferences regarding work and training. This validation is based on interviews with refugee and on documents from the Danish Immigration Service, Red Cross Denmark, etc. Various web-based tools, used to map the skills and competences through dialogue-based methods, are available for the validation process. In addition, some municipalities use the programme for assessment and validation of prior learning from the adult vocational training system (AMU), which also includes practical testing through work-based skills demonstrations. All information from the validation process is registered and updated regularly with additional information—e.g. on new plans for or agreements about training and job.

In the *hospitality* programme, the Roskilde Municipality and the hotel company cooperated on the screening and selection of potential participants among refugees. Next, the company carried out individual interviews with all refugees on the list of candidates for the programme. The close cooperation between the municipality and the company on the matching and alignment of their mutual expectations is seen as a key to the success of the programme.

In the *transport* programme, the applying refugees were carefully screened and selected through an extended process that involved both the employers and the municipality. While the truck driver occupation is generally seen as a male occupation, the participants in the programme include both men and women. This is important because the employment rate of female refugees is much lower than of male refugees. The participants did not meet the language requirement to follow an ordinary driver course, but they were chosen for having a strong motivation to become drivers. The employers gave priority to those refugees who demonstrated engagement and motivation. The employment counsellors at the training provider have close connections to the transportation companies and support this to match the refugees with companies looking for skilled drivers.

Process: Finance and funding

Finance and funding

Calculations of the costs of the targeted industry programmes and of the savings achieved by the improved employment rate demonstrate that the municipalities gain from investment in these programmes. The programmes are mainly financed by municipalities that have a responsibility for the refugees. The state funding of municipalities for refugees gives the municipalities strong financial incentives to help refugees enter into employment. The current projects represent a significant expense for the Roskilde Municipality because they are tailored to specific groups of refugees. However, it is economically efficient because most of the participating refugees are likely to become employed when they complete the course. This is a result of the close collaboration between the municipality and the group of employers. Refugees are being trained in internships in these companies, where they gain valuable firm-specific skills during their training.

Output: Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Like other targeted industry programmes, the two programme described above are organised around standardised modules in the national adult vocational training programmes (AMU). These modules provide certificates that are generally recognised in the labour market because the labour market organisations are closely involved in setting the aims and the content of the modules. Some of the modules include tailored language training integrated with work-related training and are aimed at refugees and immigrants. In the transport programme, the participants receive a truck driver certificate and also, possibly, special freight certificates and additional certificates that are recognised in the labour market. The final exam is conducted in the Danish language but the participants can pay to include an Arabic language interpreter. As employers in the transportation sector find it difficult to attract skilled drivers, the participants in this programme have good opportunities for employment when they complete it.

Best practices in Germany

BEF Alpha

General description

The programme of the “Bildungsjahr für erwachsene Flüchtlinge” (engl.: year of education for adult refugees), short BEF Alpha is a training year for adult refugees, which provides participants with an important foundation for integration into business and society. It sets the modules in literacy and language support, vocational orientation, everyday competences, basic political education, equality and internships.

BEF Alpha is aimed at people with little or no knowledge of the Latin script and the German language. Here, they receive a basic prerequisite for training and an offer to participate in further learning or to step into the labour market. Continuing education institutions, such as adult education centres, Kolping-Educational work, The International Confederation and other independent organisations, set the content of and requirements for the vocational qualification year in coordination with the Ministry of Education Baden-Württemberg.

Their offer is aimed at refugees who are typically between 20 and 35 years old and it is particularly addressed to women with children. The project comprises 28 hours per week, of which between 16 and 18 hours are devoted to literacy and language promotion, 6 hours to vocational orientation and vocational preparation, 2 hours to everyday competences and 2 hours to social studies and basic political education.

Participants are selected on the basis of criteria such as age, nationality and the degree of literacy. The final decision is made by the project managers. This procedure results from a close cooperation during the selection process with employment agencies and job centres; the composition of the refugee groups must be taken into account. The participants come from almost all refugee countries but especially from Syria, Afghanistan, Gambia, Somalia, Eritrea and Pakistan.

The project-executing agencies raise the mostly high motivation and cohesion of the participants, regardless of their nationality, sex and age. The performance is extremely heterogeneous. The courses show an internal differentiation, which is individually supported for the participants. The participants are people without literacy skills, refugees with only Arabic writing skills and people with school education but without German language skills. BEF Alpha makes it possible to switch between teaching units and practical work, especially through the internship and the vocational orientation. This increases the motivation of the participants, as they can directly demonstrate practical skills and apply newly learnt language skills. The results in the language field are marked by extremely difficult starting conditions. The majority of the participants complete the course with a higher level of knowledge after their alphabetization, mostly A1 and A2, and also B1 in some cases.

This is often followed by admission to further learning programmes. As a result of the internship, it is sometimes possible to place students in the labour market and, less often, in vocational training. The participants also receive a clear perspective on their integration, especially as the programme reveals the talents and abilities of an individual for a particular profession.

The project, as a whole, presents an important step towards refugee integration by incorporating all decisive content-related components. This is expressly underlined by the sponsors.

Link: <https://www.berufsorientierungsprogramm.de/angebote-fuer-fluechtlinge/de/projekt-bildungsjahr-fuer-erwachsene-fluechtlinge-bef-alpha-1981.html>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Learning goals and content/ Support system and coordination

Learning goals and content

At the input level, the BEF Alpha project is very well positioned. It offers students many advantages right from the start. The participants are accompanied from the beginning and are valued. The flexible design of the curriculum in this project is its especially positive aspect.

BEF Alpha offers content on various topics, such as literacy, language development, vocational orientation, everyday skills, basic political education and equality. The majority of lessons, however, are devoted to language development and literacy. Students have a total of 28 lesson hours per week in the above-mentioned subjects. The programme lasts a total of 40 weeks and the participants also complete a five-week internship.

BEF Alpha makes it possible to switch between teaching units and practical work, particularly through the internship and the vocational orientation. This increases the motivation of the participants, as they can demonstrate practical skills and apply newly learnt language skills.

Support system and coordination

The reliable offer of support and support systems is of great importance for successful entry into a new living and working environment. Refugees do not only leave their home countries and their friends but also their social environments and systemic support offers. It is, therefore, also important that the measures offer them advice and support at the same time. The success of the project depends on the close cooperation between the local authorities and the respective municipalities and districts, job centres and employment agencies, companies and volunteers. Care is always taken to ensure that refugees can report as soon as they need assistance or help. This is a matter of course within the framework of the project and refugees are aware of this. They usually have no inhibitions to ask for this help, turning to the caretakers who are regularly available. In some cases, however, refugees need social support in private matters. In these cases, there are social workers available who can help them. If the refugees have language problems or need support, they are free to ask for additional language training or coaching. All support services in the BEF Alpha project are available at all times, however, it is the refugees' responsibility to accept this support.

Process: Selection of teaching methods/ Learning language and culture

Selection of teaching methods

At the process and implementation level of a project, it can be seen what teaching methods are applied and which content has priority. It is also important to see whether the content and teaching methods are adapted to the students and take their environment into account.

This project attaches great importance to strengthening the interaction between theory and practice. Consequently, there are internships and career orientation phases that take place between the teaching units. The teachers also ensure that the participants can actively participate in the learning process and are motivated to take responsibility for their own learning. The forms of teaching are used in various ways. The emphasis is on team-oriented and collaborative forms of work. The participants can choose between different learning tasks and teaching methods and, thus, the lessons can be adapted to their different learning styles.

Learning language and culture

Learning the new language of their host country is vital for the refugees' integration process, for their

learning in VET and for their subsequent access to employment. Initial second language acquisition (SLA) in connection with VET for refugees can be organised in different ways. *Separate* language courses, organised by a professional provider and independent of the VET programme, can provide language teaching at different levels to match the requirements of individual refugees. Most of the time, the participants receive language support. Therefore, as already described above, only refugees with very little language knowledge are accepted. Outside of the language lessons, importance is also attached to the mediation of professional vocabulary. Teachers also teach basic cultural and country-specific values and norms. They were prepared for this through intercultural trainings. Hence, teachers can deal sensitively with cultural labels and stereotypes in the participants' professional and everyday environment and communicate this to them.

Output: Certifications and their recognition in the labour market/ Absence and dropout rate

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

At the output level it is possible to describe the goals and effects of a vocational training project, which is particularly important for participants. At this level, for example, it can be described what certificates and further training opportunities are given following the programme. In this context, the motivation to participate should also be explained. Accordingly, from very high dropout rates, it can be seen that the motivation of the participants to complete the project was not particularly high and could not be increased by the project managers. However, it is also interesting to learn how the programme, as such, was evaluated and whether it was evaluated at all.

As a result of the internship provided, it is sometimes possible to place students in the labour market and, less often, in vocational training. The participants also receive a clear perspective for their integration, especially as the programme reveals their talents and abilities for certain professions.

The participants then receive a certificate as a final evaluation. The companies also record and award practical skills through competence assessments. In its entirety, the project offers an important step towards the integration of refugees by incorporating all decisive content-related components. This is expressly underlined by the sponsors.

Absence and dropout rate

This project has a relatively high absence rate, which fluctuates from 0–25%. The project includes 34 different classes; therefore, the range of the dropout rate is very high. On their own, however, the high dropout or absence rates tend to result from personal factors, such as financial problems and insecure and inappropriate housing conditions. These personal reasons result in less attendance and, in the worst case scenario, the with the entire programme being discontinued. The private and financial concerns may prevent most refugees from investing sufficient time in the programme. Thus, it is all the more important to make the circumstances as pleasant as possible so that these problems do not come to the foreground. For example, aid and support measures can also help to improve refugees' living conditions. In some cases, absences are also justified by negative experiences within the measure, such as bullying or lack of support.

There are numerous efforts made, on the project management part, to keep the dropout rate as low as possible—such as sufficient support systems, class composition and target agreements.

Alfred Müller Armack Berufskolleg

General description

Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg is a commercial vocational college in the city of Cologne. The college is named after Alfred Müller-Armack, a well-known German economist and the originator of the term social market economy and its co-founder.

The college comprises a vocational school for training in banking, transport and logistics professions, a vocational school for commercial occupation preparation and a vocational school for part-time studies leading to state-certified business economist positions.

After several reorganizations of the commercial school system in Cologne, Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg has become the vocational school responsible for training for the banking and transport professions since 1972. Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg has a special sports programme in the field of full-time vocational schools.

Alfred Müller Armack Berufskolleg offers, within its classes for dual training, the possibility for refugees to participate in dual training. Refugees are not taught in separate classes but take part in regular classes. Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg is committed to ensuring that more refugees seek and complete dual vocational training. For this reason, they also offer numerous counselling and support opportunities.

This is a school measure in which the refugees are tied to the school for two to three years. The aim is to integrate the refugees into a dual education system and, thus, to integrate them into society. Vocational schools have a special role in refugee integration because they are one of the first points of contact for this target group and can basically adapt very flexibly to refugee requirements and circumstances. Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg is one of the largest vocational colleges in Cologne, offering various educational programmes. Among other things, it offers full-time vocational training or a technical college.

Link: http://www.ama-berufskolleg.de/cms/front_content.php?idart=1631&lang=1.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Support system and coordination/ Learning goals and content

Support system and coordination

When entering a new and unknown school system, in particular, good supervision and intensive support are of great importance. Refugees come from many different countries and have very different school experiences and learning requirements. It is possible that some of them already have professional and school knowledge, which is asked for at Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg. However, in some cases, there is no previous knowledge. At this point, good support during training is of great importance. The dual training classes at Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg are characterised by the fact that they offer regular support to refugees. This is provided by social workers or teachers. The pupils can contact counsellors with linguistic or social questions.

Another important aspect is the coordination within the school or within the project. It is incredibly important for newly immigrated or fleeing people to be in a regulated and structured environment and to have routines because this is often an aspect that has been missing from their lives in recent months during their flight or at home. Hence, if there is a regular school day and structures are clear from begin on, refugees can start more easily and integrate successively. This is guaranteed at Alfred-Müller-Armack-

Berufskolleg because the offer for refugees has been in place at this school for a number of years and, consequently, clear structures and guidelines exist.

Learning goals and content

Another important factor at the input level is the curricular design with its content and learning goals. This means, therefore, that an adjustment must naturally be made for the target refugee group. The content and learning expectations available in standard classes can often not be used for the vocational training of refugees. That is why it is important to adapt the content to the lives of the refugees and also to promote the refugees' linguistic and cultural learning. Depending on the final goal, the learning goals are formulated differently. However, it should always be borne in mind that basic skills may need to be acquired. Particularly in view of the high heterogeneity in the dual classes, it is essential to adapt the curriculum to the students. At Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg, the curriculum for the dual classes is updated and adapted annually. The Ministry of Education, the School Directorate and the teaching staff are consulted in this process. What is particularly positive is that the pupils have the opportunity to shorten their training period if they already possess certain knowledge.

This provides refugees with an advantage, allowing them to complete their training more quickly and to enter the labour market earlier to make a living if they are already in possession of certain necessary knowledge.

Process: Selection of teaching methods/ Learning language and culture

Selection of teaching methods

The teachers of the dual classes try to involve the pupils in the teaching process because they consider it important to adopt different approaches to meet the needs of pupils. This creates an inclusive learning environment in which students feel comfortable and where it is possible to exchange openly and respectfully.

Furthermore, teachers intend to achieve the social integration of refugees. In the classroom, no one is excluded, discriminated against or treated badly. This should also be the case outside the school. The vocational college should be a place in which discrimination and exclusion have no place. Thus, a harmonious and open learning culture is promoted. Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg always tries to keep an open-minded and friendly atmosphere so that refugees feel valued and recognised in the school system.

Learning language and culture

Just as important as technical support is the linguistic and cultural support for refugees. Only a holistic promotion on all of these different levels can guarantee that refugees have a chance to enter the education system. Although German is a compulsory subject in the curriculum of the dual classes, the refugee pupils do not receive more German lessons than regular pupils. However, there is always the possibility to express a need for additional German language support and to ask for additional assistance. With regard to professional language skills, in particular, pupils can count on support if they have difficulties. In addition, it should be mentioned that the teachers involved have all completed an intercultural advanced training course and are therefore able to act in a culturally sensitive manner in the classroom, integrating it into the lesson preparation accordingly.

Output: Certifications and their recognition in the labour market/ Assessment of learning progress

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

At the output level, the long-term objectives of the training should be defined and achieved. These include, for example, certificates or diplomas obtained. At the end of the dual classes, the pupils receive a certificate that can help them advance on the job market. Since Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg is a vocational college, there is direct access to formal certificates and attestations. As in all other courses, refugees are also regularly graded and receive a certificate at the end. This certificate is generally recognised and offers access to further training courses or internships—or even a training place—to refugees.

Assessment of learning progress

During the course of the lessons, teachers take care to give students regular feedback, to encourage them to learn new things on a regular basis and to challenge them. The pupils also judge and support one another at the same time. However, respectful treatment among them should never be neglected.

The teachers at Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg take great care to ensure that the participants' evaluations are always fair and objective. They also focus more on progress and success than on deficits. In this manner, the learning successes of participants are valued and recognised. They give the participants additional tips on how they can improve their learning steps and work on them. These tips are always practical. This school also refrains from using the hierarchical ranking assessment of participants. It is clear to all that the pupils' learning levels, motivations and interests are very different and that not all achieve learning success quickly. There are often distortions in grading in the school context and, especially, in the work with refugees who do not master the German language so well. This is also due to the fact that participants are unable to articulate themselves sufficiently in their subjects and teachers dangerously tend to give poor assessments as a result. In the Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg programme, however, care is taken to ensure that such distortion does not occur. For this reason, the grades of the language support courses are also taken into account when deciding on the German language grade, for example. Furthermore, in some cases, there is an equalisation of disadvantages in class tests so that refugees are given a little more time to answer the questions.

Sprint Dual

General description

SPRINT Dual (Sprach- und Integrationsprojekt; *engl.*: language and integration project) is the successor of a fruitful pilot project called 'SPRINT—Language and Integration' at vocational schools. SPRINT DUAL is a language and integration project for young refugees in preparation for in-company vocational training. SPRINT is aimed at both school-age and non-school-age immigrants who are between 16 and 21 years of age. The state school authority in Niedersachsen leads the project. Interested schools can register for this project as interested parties and can then offer the project in their own schools. This is a school experiment to test a new pedagogical and organisational concept for immigrant youths, which has been tested since 2015.

One criticism is that there are not enough school places for newly immigrated children and young people in vocational preparation classes. In addition, access to these classes is reserved exclusively for school-age youths even though there is also a very high need for language support measures for older youths. In order to give schools the opportunity to act appropriately in this situation, in the sense of a competence centre, a model project is being set up within the framework of the school law, aiming to familiarise young refugees as quickly and intensively as possible with the German language, culture and working life. A minimum of 9 and a maximum of 17 young people can participate per programme.

The contents of this project are divided into three funding modules:

- *Module I:* Language acquisition.
- *Module II:* Introduction to the regional cultural and living environment.
- *Module III:* Introduction to professional and working life.
- *Module IV:* Consolidation language acquisition.
- *Module V:* Promotion of basic knowledge, in particular mathematics.
- *Module VI:* Practical introduction to professional and working life.

In the first years, the focus is placed on teaching the German language; thus, Module I is the main focus of the SPRINT programme. Modules II and III are designed offensively so that the acquired language competences can be further trained and consolidated in an application-oriented way. The modules can be carried out in a school's own institution or in extracurricular ones. Within the framework of Module III, in-company internships should be integrated. The practice-oriented introduction to professional and working life is the focus of the project; hence, Module VI, in the second year, forms the focal point of the project. Modules IV and V are taught on a cross-professional basis. The implementation of modules IV and V is the responsibility of a school. The implementation of Module VI is the responsibility of a company.

Since this is not teaching in the sense of the regulation on vocational schools but a special programme, it is not a prerequisite that the offer is made exclusively by teachers. The schools decide on their own about who they consider suitable to implement the measure. Depending on the region, there are very different variants.

Link: <http://www.mk.niedersachsen.de/startseite/aktuelles/presseinformationen/sprint-dual-kultusministerium-und-regionaldirektion-niedersachsen-bremen-starten-sprach--und-integrationsprojekt-fuer-jugendliche-fluechtlinge-zur-vorbereitung-auf-eine-betriebliche-ausbildung-146645.html>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Learning goals and content/ Support system and coordination/ Access and entrance requirements

Learning goals and content

What is special about SPRINT is that participating schools can individually design the programme. This means that the curriculum is structured quite flexibly and openly, allowing the schools to choose their own content focus for specific target groups. No rigid framework is given—the modules can be customised according to the on-site needs. This curriculum is regularly adapted and updated to the requirements of the labour market. With these possibilities of individual design, the project responds to the challenge of the target group heterogeneity on the one hand and to different framework conditions of individual vocational schools on the other.

Support system and coordination

SPRINT Dual tries to ensure the holistic support and accompaniment of refugees. The 25 training buddies give the SPRINT pupils two hours of language tuition once a week but also tips on leisure activities in Osnabrück. In order to introduce the immigrant students to local students, a ‘speed dating’ is arranged with the vocational school classes. In addition to such internal measures, there are also projects with external partners who want to volunteer. Furthermore, the participants in the SPRINT and language classes can test themselves together with Volkswagen trainees in partner and trust exercises. In general, supervisors and social workers support the students. In some cases, there is also support in terms of financial security and adequate housing conditions.

Access and entrance requirements

The entrance requirements for this measure are relatively flat. Participants are not expected to have any professional or technical knowledge. However, they must have a minimum language level of B1. All school-age and non-school-age youths between the ages of 16 and 21 can take part in the project. Most SPRINT DUAL participants have previously completed the pilot project, ‘SPRINT—Language and Integration’, and thus already have a certain level of language proficiency. Consequently, SPRINT DUAL is a perfect qualification for these new immigrants. However, those who have not previously enjoyed SPRINT support can also join the SPRINT DUAL project.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

German language teaching is the main focus, hence, SPRINT centres on Module 1. Modules II and III are to be designed offensively so that the acquired language competences can be further trained and consolidated in an application-oriented way. Language instruction at SPRINT Dual also includes learning during vocational training or cultural learning. Language instruction, therefore, alternates between language promotion and vocational training. Some schools relate vocational subjects directly to language teaching. The cultural codes and norms for social interaction in Germany are also an integral part of the language teaching. In addition, students are always encouraged to talk about their own personal cultural encounters and experiences.

Selection of teaching methods

The selection of teaching methods at SPRINT DUAL is also particularly positive. The schools ensure that the pupils' previous motivation to learn and their plans for the future are taken into account. The pupils are actively involved in the learning process. There is also a very open and collaborative learning atmosphere. Students can manage their own learning tasks, which promotes learning experiences.

Output: Certifications and their recognition in the labour market/ Assessment of learning progress

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

The output level in this project includes aspects such as assessment of learning progress, certification or absenteeism. One of the most important indicators, from the refugees' point of view, is probably certification and its recognition in the labour market. Provided that the underlying measure or project offers good formal and recognised certification, there is a strong incentive for refugees to complete it successfully. At SPRINT DUAL, the existing competences are already identified before the start of the project. This is done on the website: www.Werkstattschule.de/compass . KomPASS³ is a competence assessment procedure that was specially developed for young people with little knowledge of German. It is based on the komPASS procedure developed in the vocational orientation centre. On this page, there is also a logbook that serves as a basis for the teachers to certify acquired competences. In addition, the students receive a confirmation of participation and the results of the language-free test to determine their competence in mathematics. In some cases, students also take a certificate as part of a language (DSDI PRO) exam or do an internship and receive an internship certificate.

Assessment of learning progress

SPRINT DUAL's assessment methods are particularly positive and can be observed at most schools. Tailor-made and individual assessment of students enables teachers to adapt to the needs and progress of each individual. In addition, students receive accurate feedback and can focus on improving their learning progress. Furthermore, a good and regular assessment of learning progress promotes self-assessment competence. In this way, students learn to become self-directed and lifelong learners. The DSDI PRO and komPASS³ evaluation formats used by SPRINT DUAL are particularly noteworthy. The schools operating under the SPRINT Dual programme make use of numerous different forms of assessment. These include, for example, formal assessment in the classical sense, which is given orally or in writing. Feedback from other employees or customers is also regarded as a form of evaluation. In most cases, and especially in the case of the refugee group, a pure evaluation with marks or points is not effective enough. Therefore, SPRINT DUAL pays special attention to highlighting progress and improvements rather than deficits. In doing so, practical impulses and feedback are always given. At SPRINT DUAL, there is an open discussion atmosphere in which students are encouraged to openly address and discuss their mistakes. In addition, it should be emphasised that the grades and assessments of pupils are not used to create a hierarchical ranking in any way.

KOFA-refugees in internship

General description

This is an internship measure designed for refugees who are interested in working in metal construction. Two former retired metalworkers carry out a two-month practical phase in two different craft enterprises. The vocational and linguistic preparation is undertaken by a special adult education centre. In total, the programme contains three modules.

This project is a measure that is led by Märkischer Arbeitgeberverband, a local employment agency, and by Volkshochschule Ennepe-Ruhr-Süd and is carried out in training workshops of the Altenloh, Brinck & Co Group and Thyssen-Krupp Bielstein. Märkische Arbeitgeberverband has already carried out similar projects in other companies.

The selection of refugees is carried out by the Hagen Employment Agency and the Ennepe-Ruhr Job Centre. The Adult Education Centre provides support in form of vocational and language courses. The measure includes a multi-stage qualification. This qualification is divided into three modules. In the first module, professional inputs are given in a six-week period so that the participants can be at a uniform level. This module is carried out by Volkshochschule Ennepe-Ruhr-Süd, the adult education centre. The aim is to import initial language skills in the professional field and to expand existing language skills.

The second module extends linguistic competences in the vocational field. The module lasts for two months and is also carried out by the adult education centre.

The internship lasts for two months and is carried out in the field of metal technology. Participants receive their first basic professional knowledge in the field of metal and can test themselves in workshops.

The special feature of this project is that the practice-oriented two-month measure is carried out by two retired skilled workers. They do this on a voluntary basis and design their own curriculum. Before they started coaching, the two seniors took part in an intercultural preparatory meeting with lecturers from the Adult Education Centre and refugees from Syria. They then developed their own teaching material and set up the project. Refugees are supposed to build a luffing man, which is also part of German education in this area. The skills needed for the little luffing man actually represent a cross-section of the qualifications required for training as an industrial mechanic. The two of skilled worker retirees have produced a manual outlining the most important technical terms.

Link: <https://www.kofa.de/dossiers/fluechtlinge-integrieren/praxisbeispiele/storytelling-fluechtlinge-im-praktikum>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Contact with students/ Support system and coordination

Contact with students

The level of input is particularly important in relation to vocational training measures, especially if the participants are not previously from this specific vocational field. This is why things, such as entry requirements, first contact with the participants and existing support systems, are particularly important. This refugee project is characterised by the fact that it places great value on getting to know the participants intensively and to question existing prerequisites when selecting and getting to know them for the first time. The first contact with the refugees is carried out by all project managers, i.e. representatives of the adult education centre, companies and employment agencies. The employment agencies select the

refugees who are allowed to participate. The subsequent meeting makes it possible to find out what their needs and previous knowledge are. Thus, it is possible to adapt the programme in this area. In addition, there are also rehearsal days held in the workshop during which the participants must to prove their skills.

Support system and coordination

Apart from the technical and content training of the participants, it is very important to support them in other areas as well. This usually requires good coordination between the persons or institutions involved. Only if coordination is transparent enough for the refugees will they be able to take advantage of it and accept offers of support. In this project there are different options for participants to receive support. There is the possibility to contact a social counsellor with social matters. For legal questions, there is also legal advice for the participants. If, despite the language courses, there are still language barriers, then participants can also ask for further language support or tutoring. Refugees are not left without support. In addition to the technical support provided by the two heads of the practice, there is also a social worker and a legal adviser who the participants can use during the measure. The Adult Education Centre also provides support in the form of vocational and language courses. It is also advantageous if the questions about the right to stay have been resolved before the refugees start working in a company.

Process: Selection of teaching methods/ Learning language and culture

Selection of teaching methods

At the process level, the role of the mediators, i.e. the trainer and the teacher, is strongly focused. Hence, it focuses on the extent to which teachers adapt their teaching methods to the participants and how language learning is supported. In this project, the initiative of the two heads of practice deserves special mention. Before they started coaching, the two pensioners took part in an intercultural preparatory meeting with lecturers from the adult education centre and refugees from Syria. They then developed their own teaching materials and set up a project. The refugees are supposed to build for a certain practical work a “luffing man”, which is also part of German education in this area. The skills needed for such a “luffing man” actually represent a cross-section of the qualifications required for training as an industrial mechanic—building a metal man who swings back and forth on contact with a spot. It is a task that German trainees also work on in training workshops. The two of heads of practice produced a manual outlining the most important technical terms.

Learning language and culture

Linguistic support is not ignored in this project. The two pensioners developed a handbook with important vocabulary for the metal trade. These terms are also used in practice so that the participants are forced to learn them. Otherwise, they would have difficulty doing the job well. The language can be much improved through the constant change between linguistic and professional advancement. However, participants also have separate language lessons in which they discuss technical contents. In class, there is always room for cultural exchange. Participants can talk openly about their experiences and achieve a better understanding of German culture as a result—but this also works the other way round. Teachers can also learn something from the cultural experiences of the participants.

The two retired metalworkers ensure that cultural knowledge and codes, as well as language skills, are imparted during the implementation process. For example, they pay close attention to the punctuality of the participants. They set a time for the start of work and then expect the participants to arrive on time. They should not arrive too early nor too late. However, they soon realised that this would be difficult and therefore introduced a stamp system for the participants. The refugees must, therefore, record their arrival times using the stamp system just like normal trainees and are therefore subject to stricter controls.

However, this means that the two pensioners are able to ensure that the participants pay more attention to their punctuality. They learn that this is part of a job in Germany and that Germans find this very important.

Output: Assessment of learning progress/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Assessment of learning progress

Probably the most important level, from the point of view of the refugees, is the output level. It is particularly important to know what certification the participants receive and how this can be used in the labour market. The evaluation of the learning progress of the participants should not be ignored. There are regular feedback events during the measure, both in the language lessons and in the workshop. The feedback comes from a variety of sources. Sometimes from the teachers, sometimes the trainers and sometimes the other participants. The teachers also always lead the students to evaluate and reflect on themselves. Learning goals are set, which serve as an orientation for the students. In their assessment, the teachers also give tips on how the students can improve their practice.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

The participants receive a job reference at the end of the project. This certificate can be used to apply for further training if necessary. Certification for this project is particularly important for the participants, as it may facilitate access to internships or training places in case this is needed. However, the participants already benefit from the large practical gain they receive from the KOFA programme. At the end of the measure, they have learned to use the machines properly, have learned a whole range of technical terms and have finally developed a product. This practical experience is of great importance to the participants.

Job to Stay

General description

The project titled 'Job to Stay'—Sustainable Integration of Low-Skilled Refugees into the Tourism Labour Market' is a project that primarily aims at reducing vacancies in the tourism industry. It covers several countries, including Germany, Italy, Austria, France and Slovenia. Due to the specific disadvantage of refugee women in several European countries, this project tries to increase their chances of employment through professional development. In general, this measure criticises the existing refugee policies in various countries. Language and cultural challenges make it difficult for refugees to enter the labour market successfully. In addition, entry requirements are kept very strict, which often cannot be met by the refugees because their foreign qualifications are not recognised or have been lost.

The project is coordinated by Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM) GmbH and has several partner institutions in different European countries that participate in the programme by offering working places for the participating refugees.

The project intends to prepare the refugees for their entry into the tourism industry within 24 months, through professional and linguistic support. The programme includes several main activities:

1. Five selected qualification profiles for low-level assistant jobs are established. These jobs include housekeeping, kitchen assistant, assistant cook, assistant barman and barmaid and landscape management assistant.
2. Development of a qualification pass assessment and accreditation model for selected job profiles, including personalised CVs or transcriptions for formal certificates from home countries. Based on this assessment it is possible to develop an individual qualification pass for each person and to design a personalised job integration plan.
3. Development of job integration plans. In five countries, 600 refugees will undergo the 'Job to Stay' assessment procedure. It is ensured that at least 70% of the participants are female. Each of them has the opportunity to work in a nine-month placement in addition to receiving workplace-based learning accompanied by language and cultural training, social-psychological support and support tailor-made to address women's needs, which ensures that all persons reach at least qualification level 3 and long-term integration into the tourism labour market is achieved.
4. Regular publications for actors, such as policy-makers, at local, regional, national and European levels, in particular.

Link: <https://www.fh-mittelstand.de/jobtostay/>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Support system and coordination

Sustainable demand on the training programme

On the input level, it is important to consider the basic conditions with which the project starts. These include the entry requirements, the content and the organisational requirements anchored in the curriculum but also the need for this project.

In this project, in particular, the demand in the field of tourism is particularly high. The sector suffers from the fact that there are no well-trained specialists in the fields of housekeeping, kitchen assistant, assistant cook, assistant barman and barmaid or landscape management assistant. Politicians and the tourism industry have not really begun to link the need for more staff with the demands of refugees. However, refugees often cannot prove they have formal education or that they are accredited in their host country; therefore, they usually cannot work in jobs that ask for officially accredited qualifications and more often they have to enter labour markets at the lowest level of unqualified work.

As this project aims to reduce unemployment among female refugees, they are given preference when registering. Therefore, it is ensured that about 70% of the participants are female. In addition, a minimum level of language proficiency is required, determined by means of a competence test.

Support system and coordination

As this project is for a very specific industry, it is important to reduce possible barriers or difficulties to participation. Therefore, project managers have taken care to offer support. Participants have the opportunity to obtain psychological or linguistic support from their supervisors during the implementation of the project. Intensive and regular linguistic support ensures that the participants can follow the project and do not lose touch. This could lead to the project being seen as too demanding and the participants, consequently, breaking off. However, the project takes care to recognise the needs of the participants to a certain extent and also to try to fulfil them.

However, the project manager thinks that it would be a great advantage for the project if there were so-called 'Buddies'. These 'Buddies' could accompany and support the participants more intensively. At this point, there is apparently still a need for expansion in the project. However, this expansion also involves new personnel and financial resources. Nevertheless, it is clear that refugees would be safer if they were given intensive care with the help of a 'buddy'. They could talk to this person eye-to-eye and ask for advice.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

Learning the German language is one of the most important aspects of this project. For the hotel and tourism industry, sufficient knowledge of German is required. 'Job to Stay' offers participants a nine-month internship in the tourism sector. In addition, they receive language and cultural training.

When selecting or training teachers for German lessons, great care is taken to ensure that they are prepared for cultural labelling and stereotyping to be an issue in the classroom. Teachers, therefore, must be well prepared and trained. The teachers themselves must also know how to deal with a very heterogeneous and diverse group of participants and how best to teach them. Project leaders actively oppose discrimination and racism. They promote a learning culture characterised by openness, inclusivity and recognition of diversity. It is well known that many of the refugees are from countries where religions other than Christianity dominate. Therefore one can count on the fact that there are many participants who belong to another religion. Accordingly, the topic of religion is also discussed in class or religious needs become apparent during the project. At this point, it is very important that the teachers are able to deal with this topic professionally.

Selection of teaching methods

The 'Job to Stay' project tries to include refugees in its lesson planning in order to meet their needs. Therefore, the previous learning habits and learning motivation of the refugees are examined and included in the planning. For example, it can be seen at what learning pace a learner group works and what learning incentives are most effective for them. Participants are actively involved in the planning of their individual

activities and project managers ensure that the participants' ambitions and objectives are met. Participants should also learn that failure and error are a normal part of learning. They should be aware of the fact that it is not possible to only achieve successes but to also experience smaller or bigger failures at one point or another. This should lead the participants to a practical and independent learning so that they do not despair over every small failure and give up. The project promotes practical learning in the workplace, as participants are directly involved and challenged in the tourism sector. There is also a so-called activity plan within the framework of the project and participants are involved in the conception of this plan.

Since the learning progress of the participants is very different in most cases, the project managers make sure that there are always different tasks that involve a differentiation of their various levels. This means that everyone can participate successfully and is not over- or underchallenged. In addition, the participants can contact the teachers at any time if they do not find a task or requirement appropriate to their level. The project ensures that there is a good and open exchange between the project leaders and the teachers. This good relationship makes it possible to meet the individual needs of the participants.

Output: Certifications and their recognition in the labour market/ Absence and dropout rate

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

At the output level, it is interesting to find out how participants can continue to use the 'Job to Stay' qualification and whether the certification is recognised. The project aims to employ more refugees, especially women, in the tourism sector. A so-called Qualification Pass was developed, which contains and certifies personal data, previous knowledge and acquired skills and competences. For this purpose, the assessments and feedback of the companies is also to be obtained. This Qualification Pass also represents the certification of the project that, at best, should facilitate an entry into the tourism industry. At the end, the project is evaluated with a 'Lessons learned' paper.

Absence and dropout rate

For the successful implementation of a vocational training measure, it is particularly important that the attendance is as high as possible and the dropout rate as low as possible. It is important that refugees carry out the measure properly in order to obtain their certificate or attestation. Most participants are aware of this but can still often be absent or even abandon the programme. In order to keep these quotas as low as possible, 'Job to Stay' offers support systems. These are designed to ensure that participants do not drop out because of difficulties or hurdles. In addition, 'Job to Stay' also recognises knowledge and qualifications that refugees bring with them. The project managers do not yet know how high the termination rate is, as the project is currently running, but they are meticulous to implement ways to counteract it.

Best practices in Italy

IAL Lombardia

General description

Innovazione Apprendimento Lavoro (IAL) is a social enterprise that provides vocational training, consisting of 12 offices in Lombardy and one in the city of Bergamo. IAL organises higher education courses, lifelong learning, continuous training and orientation services. Moreover, it arranges vocational courses in order to foster the individuals' entrances into the labour market; it organises, amongst other things:

- warehouse management classes,
- forklift driver classes and
- cleaner classes.

Several courses are free and intended to grant an attestation of frequency. The classes are not specifically designed for refugees but there is a high-rate of asylum-seeker students.

IAL Bergamo has four workers who manage the projects and some teachers (depending on the classes activated). Last year, the organization organised 10 courses: the one with the most participant and editions was the forklift driver class (a course total of 60 hours).

IAL Bergamo has the possibility to cooperate with other institutions, such as Confederazione Italiana Sindacati lavoratori (CISL) syndicate, and other services, such as the Associazione Nazionale Oltre le Frontiere (ANOLF), an association linked with CISL that promotes citizenship rights by assisting migrants and asylum seekers in their relationship with public administration.

IAL, ANOLF and CISL share the same building and have the possibility to strictly cooperate. This is very important for the management of refugee students' training and puts the basis for the possible creation of an integrated support system and a contact persons network, which could assist refugees in their integration and help them solve problems related to their condition, such as housing, healthcare and relationship with the bureaucracy. This evolving collaboration could be seen as a strong point. This existing linkage is reinforced through an online database shared between IAL and CISL. This database contains all information (biographical data and personal curriculum) about those who want to join a training course or who have benefitted from CISL services. By using this database, IAL managers can make the planning of the vocational courses more effective, being more in tune with the labour market and with the training demands of the refugees. During the interview, IAL manager reported that an extension of this digital platform is in the programme in order to make connections between diverse institutional realities and the refugees' integration path even more effective. Nowadays, this database is used by six offices in Lombardy but IAL has received requests for the extension of the use of the platform from other Italian regions.

Another important strong point of the IAL training courses is the internship period after the course—if there is some kind of public funding then the internship is free, but if there is no funding and IAL is the promoter of the internship then the company has to bear the costs. Internships are vital because they allow students to apply their competences in the workplace. There are no specific internship periods for refugees; in fact, the low language competences are often a barrier. One of the possible solutions to this problem could be the extension of the use of the online platform, which could allow for the selection of refugee students on the basis of their language level.

Moreover, one additional strength is the link between the IAL and the labour market, which creates the possibility to always be connected with the employment world and to organise classes that allow refugee

students to acquire competences directly and quickly use them in the workplace. This capacity makes the IAL training path useful and strongly job-oriented.

Official web site: <https://www.ialombardia.it/>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Access and entrance requirements/ Support system and coordination/ Learning goals and content/ Contact with students

Access and entrance requirements

In order to join the IAL vocational courses, candidates must have all the documents needed for a government funding application. These kinds of documents are stated in the regional and national legislation. Another prerequisite is the language competence, especially for courses that require written tests.

In this regard, there are language tests conducted in order to testify to the competences of the candidate. At the beginning of the course/job placement path, there are meetings and during which the content of the classes and the timetables are shared.

Support system and coordination

The main type of support offered by IAL is language support through specific language modules during the courses. In this way, refugee students can improve their linguistic level with in-class work strictly linked to their vocational training.

Moreover, in case of particular personal problems, the IAL cooperates with a non-profit association that gives psychological support to refugee students. This kind of collaboration underlines IAL's efforts to guarantee the students' well-being, even if, as reported by IAL's manager, right now this is not a planned form of official support but only an informal partnership.

Even though the possibility to provide students with a more planned and effective psychological support before the beginning of the courses is going to be planned with the cooperation of CISL. This purpose could led to a closer collaboration between IAL and CISL by incorporating support for the psychological well-being in every vocational path for every student.

The IAL manager reported that linguistic support is most needed at the moment and that the presence of a social worker could be useful.

Learning goals and content

There is no precise training available because most of the activity depends on the budget lines that are accessible at the moment of the planning of the activities. In any case, in recent years, IAL has succeeded in ensuring an adequate variety of courses in relation to the labour market and students' demands.

Regarding the course's learning goals and content, adaptability is possible by respecting the aggregate course time established by financing, which varies depending on the characteristics of the target group.

The planning of the training available is annual and, during the setting up of the specific course's curriculum, the school managers involve course coordinators and tutors.

Contact with students

The first encounter is informal and not structured but is required for access to vocational courses. Nevertheless, IAL, in collaboration with CISL, is trying to make this process more structured, coordinated and effective. Students' entrance and, in general, the entire set up process for vocational courses (evaluation of the demand, candidate research, initial evaluation, etc.) can be fostered by the coordination between the IAL and CISL offices that are responsible for work and migrant issues. This kind of cooperation can be enabled by using and improving the shared database used by all CISL offices.

During the first encounter, the course coordinators and tutors are involved and a group meeting can be arranged. The results of the first encounter determine the students' access and influences the composition of classes and the curriculum.

Process: Finance and funding/ Selection of teaching methods

Finance and funding

IAL is a social enterprise with a non-profit fiscal regime. There is an economic report that principally regards accountability and funds requests. During the economical evaluation, the project managers are involved in order to make it more effective. IAL raises funds from both the public and private sectors.

Selection of teaching methods

Students are motivated through the awareness of their previous training and learning, by knowing and testing their motivation and understanding their personal ambitions and future plans. During the lessons, teachers offer the students the possibility for active involvement in the learning process and they encourage them to improve their abilities through practical activities, promoting group and cooperative learning strategies.

The majority of these activities are also included in the job placement paths that are performed in parallel with the training courses—these activities are, for example, skill assessment, individual and group job orientation, individual and group coaching, internships, 'Job Club', etc.

In particular, the 'Job Club' is an IAL initiative that consists of group work during which students are informed about job seeking. In this way, refugee students have the possibility to support each other, band together and share experiences.

Teaching methods are adapted, with a teacher/student ratio that allow the individuals' needs to be satisfied. Moreover, students are encouraged to share their experiences with classmates and their teachers support social inclusion and prevent the formation of closed groups.

Output: Assessment of learning progress/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Assessment of learning progress

The training courses always include both oral and written tests to verify the progress of classes. The evaluation is more formal with courses that follow a specific regulation and require specific attestations to be obtained.

Feedback from teachers/trainers is provided, which is useful for the tutors who support the refugee students during the courses and during the following job placement process.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

When a refugee enters an IAL project, minimum services (welcoming, interview, definition of the path) are always provided. These actions allow for getting to know the students and for evaluating their competences to better define the vocational contents and orientation strategies useful for labour market entrance.

IAL Bergamo does not release competence certifications but only certifications of participation.

Engim Lombardia

General Description

Ente Nazionale Giuseppini del Murialdo (ENGIM) manages vocational training classes in the province of Bergamo. Its mission is to guarantee adequate training in order to foster the entrance of youth and adults into the labour market.

The school has performed its activity in the city of Bergamo until 2001, when it moved to Valbrembo, a small village near the city. The new location is in a rural area, allowing the school to benefit from regional funding for agricultural development and to set up its first course for agricultural operators. In the 2000s, new schools opened in Valbrembo, pushing local administration to improve public transportation and services and build new infrastructures. Due to this development, ENGIM had the possibility to improve its work through seven different curricula programmes and many vocational courses for adults. In addition to this, the new location gave the school managers the possibility to create strong links and partnerships with local business enterprises.

Regarding vocational training, there is no specific class for refugee students and, in many of them, the refugee rate is not very high. Nevertheless, more than 60% of the participants come from abroad; thus, school managers and teachers are used to coping with typical problems related to language barriers, cultural differences, no schooling and, in general, with all the difficulties linked to social disease.

ENGIM's training and orientation activities adopt a teaching approach that is focused on multi-media teaching and 'on the ground' formation with a strong link to local businesses.

The school organises vocational courses for:

- electricity operators,
- plumbing and heating implants repairmen,
- agricultural operators,
- gardener courses,
- pizza chef courses,
- waiter courses,
- childcare classes and
- farming classes.

The school is managed by about 20 people. Almost all financing comes from regional funds, in particular, from employment funds, however, ENGIM also organises fee-paying classes for private individuals or enterprises.

The frequency of the courses depends on the request of local enterprises and institutions. In that sense, ENGIM is strictly linked to the labour market—thanks to its experience in the training field and its various activities, the school is capable of matching the labour market’s requests and offers very diversified training. Moreover, ENGIM is able to adapt its courses and training programmes, depending on market requests. This capacity is vital for refugees, in particular, who need training paths with a high competence content that would allow them to enter the labour market quickly.

The curriculum for the training programme is updated every year. Skills are certified with an official document—in some cases this is a diploma, in others it is a certificate of attendance.

Official website: <http://lombardia.engim.org/content/dove-siamo-e-orari-di-apertura#>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Learning goals and content/ Support system and coordination

Sustainable demand on the training programme

Regarding students’ demand and school’s vocational offer, their matching depends on the type of course—for caregiver classes (where there is a low rate of refugee students because of the high access requirements) the demand and the offer are equal, while for the other classes this is very changeable.

The demand for qualifications and the offer are equal. This balance is possible because of ENGIM’s strong links with local enterprises. For the same reason, school managers, when setting up of the vocational training programmes, take into particular consideration the situation of the labour market—often it is the local enterprises themselves that ask for specific training courses. In general, this strong collaboration with the local industrial base (the biggest factories in the area are located right next to the school facilities) allows the school to take into consideration the situation of the local labour market in order to make training and job orientation more effective. As a result, the entire process, from initial planning of courses to the entrance of student in the labour market, is very connected to the labour market and its fluctuations.

Learning goals and content

ENGIM has a specific curriculum for each type of vocational class. The learning goals and the learning content are updated, depending on the enterprises’ requests and legislative changes so that each is constantly revised to match the needs of the labour market, of the training market and of the regional and national legislation. ENGIM underlined the importance of this real, strong and constant connection with local industries for the effectiveness of its training measures. This closeness with the external environment is also achieved through direct involvement of employment agencies in the planning of the courses—depending on the class type, in fact, school managers and project managers can ask local employment agencies’ representatives to participate in the drafting of the programme. This planning approach can be seen, of course, as a good practice for vocational training.

Regarding ongoing curriculum adjustments, the school managers allow the trainers to modify training content on the basis of the class level and their teaching style.

Support system and coordination

With respect to the support system, the ENGIM manager reports that there are not enough resources to provide personal support for every student in their vocational courses. A professional psychologist is present in the school but works only with young students who attend the vocational secondary school

because there are not enough resources (in terms of funding and personnel) to also cover include the adult students enrolled in the vocational courses.

Despite that, ENGIM provides a tutor for every vocational course. This figure represents the contact point between the school and the students and between the students and the labour market (during the internships or the job placement). The tutor is responsible for the students' motivation and involvement—for example, the tutor calls students in case of absences or maintains contact with the entrepreneurs during the internship period.

In relation to support system coordination, the ENGIM manager reports that personal support should be taken more into account in the Italian vocational training system, in particular with regard to psychological and linguistic support. In fact, schools often do not have enough money or personnel to ensure sufficient personal support for every student. Moreover, there should be more cooperation between schools and local social services.

Process: Finance and funding/ Selection of teaching methods

Finance and funding

ENGIM has an economic report and a social report. The school has a non-profit economic regime. During the economic evaluation, the school managers and the project manager are both involved. School raises funds mainly from public sources.

Selection of teaching methods

Students are motivated through testing their previous learning in an informal way (there are no standardised tests or practical exercises). In this manner, the teachers and tutors have the possibility to create a link between the students' past experiences and their new vocational paths in order to enhance their involvement and individualise the curriculum in the best possible way.

After the internship period, and only if the teacher requires it, the students can be actively involved in the learning strategies, creating links between their traineeship and the course programme.

In case of particular personal problems or leaning difficulties, teachers can motivate the single student making him or her aware that a vocational training path implies possible failings and errors. However, this kind of assistance is offered only in particular cases and there is no organised support.

Regarding teaching methods, the teacher, if he or she considers it necessary, can adapt his or her training style to the different students' learning styles—for example, he or she could decide to use some pictures or certain multimedia content if there are particular language problems in the class group.

During the interview, ENGIM reported that, even though teachers make extensive use of active teaching methods, there are no precise and programmed guidelines, in that sense, at the management level.

Output: Absence and dropout rate/ Assessment of learning progress/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Absence and dropout rate

Dropout rate is very low and is related to personal factors—in the majority of cases, the students leave the school because they have found a new job.

There have been, in very rare instances, dropout cases resulting from an absence rate that was too high. In any case, the tutors and teachers try to reduce this phenomenon by giving personal support and assistance to the students who are often absent—for example, with a personal telephone contact in order to motivate them and to understand the reasons for their absences.

Another strategy that allows for a reduction of the dropout rate and for increasing student motivation towards their learning is to certify their previous qualifications—in so doing, the single student feels accepted, is made aware of his or her training path and has the possibility to show his or her skills in a better light. Despite this, ENGIM reported that there are often a lot of problems with national embassies, who are not always collaborative in this sense.

Assessment of learning progress

Regarding the evaluation process, there are both oral and written tests used to certify the students' progress. There is also informal feedback from the teachers, provided with the aim to make students more aware of their performance. For ENGIM, it is very important to create effective and successful links between the students and the labour market—for this reason, during the internship, the students are supported by a tutor who also collects the feedback from the enterprises regarding their performance, social skills and engagement. This kind of informal evaluation is very important because it is strictly related to practical work in an external context and is essential to motivate students, boost their integration process and provide the school with an evaluation from an external point of view.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

During the first encounter, at the beginning of the vocational path, there is an entrance evaluation of the students' technical expertise. This kind of preparatory test is performed by a teacher and is important for understanding the average level of the class. ENGIM has a certification framework for acquired skills, which varies depending on the type of course and the specific legislation—for some courses, it is possible to award the student with a competence certification, while in other cases the school can only provide a certificate of attendance.

Scuola Edile Bergamo

General description

Scuola Edile Bergamo is a vocational school that provides training to construction workers since 1983.

The school organises several short and medium classes that allow students to develop diverse competences that are useful in the construction field. The classes can be divided into three groups:

- management and administrative classes,
- technical classes and
- information technology classes.

With respect to refugees, Scuola Edile conducted a three-year vocational courses programme in collaboration with Cooperativa Ruah and Caritas. The courses involved at maximum of 20 students for 30 hours of vocational training. The training consisted of both a theoretical and practical introduction to work at a construction site. The courses were divided in two teaching modules—16 hours of safety training and 14 hours of practical workshops.

For each class, there was 1 teacher per 20 students and 1 interpreter who also had a mentoring role. The entire project was managed by a total of seven persons involved in all administrative and training issues. Particular attention was paid to possible linguistic barriers—there was a special focus on the role of the interpreter and also a multi-lingual multimedia smartphone app, which provided the students with the content of the courses in different languages and with explanatory pictures. This kind of approach made the course accessible and gave students a user-friendly instrument that offered them basic concepts useful for the labour market. In fact, the app is designed for in-class use in order to ensure that practical basis and security practices of the work at a building site are clear to all students.

Moreover, regarding practical training, the school provides all equipment, including work clothes and work tools. Thus, the managers ensure a teaching style that is focused on quick competence acquisition. This kind of approach is very important because of the high practical course content and also because of its purpose—in fact, this project was designed with a vocational guidance aim that allows students to understand that if they are interested in a career in the building industry and have some further experiences, previous competences or specific abilities, then these could foster their entrance into this sector. Consequently, the managers did not ensure a direct entrance into the labour market but they allowed the students to begin training that could lead to a professional career in the building sector and, with respect to recruitment, to know how to work safely.

Although there was not a direct channel that allowed a direct entrance into the labour market, this approach could be seen as a strength. In fact, refugee students were given the possibility to acquire skills that can foster their entrance into the job market and make their integration path more effective. Furthermore, the school facilities allowed a very practical teaching style, with several practical exercises, which could be very useful to motivate the students and to create an inclusive and co-operative environment.

Moreover, Scuola Edile Bergamo has a collaboration Cooperativa Ruah in order to provide legal support and support in terms of financial security, especially for living conditions and linguistic support.

Official web site:

http://www.scuolaedilebg.eu/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=38.

Core indicators within the programme

*Input: Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Access and entrance requirements/
Learning goals and content*

Sustainable demand on the training programme

It is important to consider that it is the project coordinator –Cooperativa Ruah– which selects the course candidates on the basis of language competences, motivation and previous experiences.

It is also important to take into account, as already mentioned, that this kind of course is not directly linked with the labour market because it is not included in a wider vocational path and career guidance process.

For these reasons, the Scuola Edile manager cannot answer what the real demand of the students or of the labour market is due to the involvement of diverse organizations that deal with refugees and vocational training, allowing for a co-ordinated selection of candidates process. It is the Cooperativa Ruah that manages the selection of the candidates; thus, the Ruah managers have the possibility to select only those refugee students who have the prerequisites to join this kind of vocational path.

More specifically, Scuola Edile and Ruah managers have decided to select 20 candidates at most for each class in order to overcome possible language problems and guarantee effective learning.

Access and entrance requirements

As mentioned above, Cooperativa Ruah is responsible for the selection of the candidates. However, it has to follow some common standards, such as an A2 linguistic level of refugees. In addition to this, the students must be at least 18 years old.

Furthermore, it is better if the candidates already have some kind of experience in the building sector; in fact, if the class is composed of students with a building background, it could be easier for the teachers and the interpreter to overcome possible language barriers and to set up a more specific vocational path.

Regarding student selection, their motivation and aptitude to join a new social group, to learn and to have positive social behaviours are also considered.

Learning goals and content

The project has a very specific and planned curriculum that specifies the goals of the programme, the target group, how the activities are performed, the schedule, the course equipment and facilities and the course's budget.

As mentioned above, the programme is composed of two different teaching modules—the first deals with security arrangements in the building sector and is aligned with the national legislation on security in a building site. This module has the goal to make students aware of the risks related to working at a building site, such as most common diseases, possible dangers, protection and prevention service. It is important to specify that the theoretical explanation is accompanied by practical exercises using the main building equipment in order to simulate the most common risk-related circumstances.

The second module is about practical work at a building site—refugee students learn how to provide assistance to other builders, how to use equipment and how to organise their workstations. Scuola Edile provides the facilities and equipment and the class is divided in small groups to make learning more effective and improve cooperation between students.

The entire process is supplemented by a multilingual smartphone app ('Babele' app <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=it.perugia.scuolaedile&hl=it>), which helps refugee students in their learning paths. The application contains the glossary of the main words used in the building industry in nine languages (English, Italian, French, German, Spanish, Albanian, Romanian, Serbian and Arabic) and the description of the typical procedures at a building site (for example, how to dig by hand or how to mix chemical substances) with photographs and images that specifically explain how to operate.

The presence of the images and the possibility to change languages makes this multimedia application very useful and accessible. The Scuola Edile manager reported that it provided concrete help for the didactic aspect of the course, allowing students to clearly understand all the contents.

Process: Finance and funding/ Selection of teaching methods

Finance and funding

Scuola Edile Bergamo has an economic report and a social report. Its economic regime is non-profit. In order to make economic evaluation more effective, the organization also involves delegates of other organizations, such as Associazione Nazionale Costruttori Edili (ANCE), Federazione Italiana Lavoratori Costruzioni e Affini (FILCA) and Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL) syndicate. Having a shared economic evaluation process is vital because it allows Scuola Edile to have a comprehensive view of the project and to engage other local entities.

Selection of teaching methods

During the interview, the Scuola Edile manager pointed out the importance of tutoring and language support. In his point of view, a condition for a successful vocational programme for refugees is the presence of a good tutor and a good interpreter. During the project, the linguistic support was provided by an interpreter from Cooperativa Ruah. Coming from an organization that specifically works with refugees, the interpreter was also able to carry out the tutoring role.

In particular, during the training, the teachers and the tutors inspired the students by focusing on their motivation and trying to foster it. At the same time, the presence of a specific practical learning module allowed for actively involving them in the training process, giving them the possibility to learn directly how to use building equipment, to cooperate with teachers and mates and to prove their ability and work experience.

Also, in this case, the presence of a multilingual app helped to involve students and to overcome language barriers—and a wide variety of illustrations allowed the students to fully understand the procedures and basic techniques.

Output: Absence and dropout rate/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Absence and dropout rate

There is no dropout rate for the project. Hence, the organization does not set up any special dropout strategy.

The interviewed manager noticed that the absence of a dropout rate is related to the pre-selection of candidates made by Cooperativa Ruah, which allows only the most motivated students to be selected, considering their language level, their attitudes, their previous experiences and their future plans.

It is important to underline that the cooperation with an external organization, which works on a daily basis with migrants, refugees and people in need, made it possible to have a holistic view of the project and be more effective and capable of answering the specific needs of the refugees.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

As mentioned above, there is no planned and organised project (for example, with traineeships or job orientation) that could directly link the Scuola Edile vocational programme with the labour market. In fact, the project primarily aims to improve the refugee students' motivation, to facilitate their integration process through practical work and to make them aware about their possible future employment.

Despite this, it is very important to certify the refugee students' participation and progress. For this reason, Scuola Edile confers a proof of participation at the end of the vocational path that could be useful if the students decide to search for employment in the building sector.

Fondazione Opera Diocesana Patronato San Vincenzo

General description

Patronato San Vincenzo is an Italian charity that provides help and support to young men, women and risk categories—poor, foreigners, unemployed and homeless.

Since 2008, Patronato San Vincenzo is responsible for the job placement of refugees and migrants. Refugee candidates mainly come from local accommodation centres. In this context, the organization sets up vocational training courses for refugees and migrants using an individual approach. In recent years, Patronato san Vincenzo has organised:

- house painter classes,
- warehouse worker and forklift driver classes,
- welder classes,
- caregiver classes,
- cleaner classes and
- machine tool classes.

These courses last from 60 to 100 hours (except courses with particular legal requirements regarding duration; for example, the caregiver classes). Each course is offered several time during the year and has specific entrance requirements but, in general, A2 language level (A1 with the presence of an interpreter) is required. If the candidate does not have this certification he or she has to take a language test in order to certify skills. The target group consist mostly of males over 18 years of age.

The project's mission is to provide training to refugees, foster their integration process and make their entrance in the labour market easier. The organization can rely on the cooperation with Cooperativa Ruah, a local charity that arranges the first welcoming of the refugees. Cooperativa Ruah provides language classes to refugee students before they join the vocational courses organised by Patronato San Vincenzo. This collaboration makes the learning process more effective and helps students without an A2 language level to fill the gap and join the courses. Moreover, it fosters the integration process and contributes to creating more homogeneous classes.

In addition to this, the presence of Ruah guarantees a more comprehensive approach to refugee problems and their integration process and offers the possibility to provide them support.

Patronato San Vincenzo is financed mostly from state funding. In case of private financing (for example from charity foundations), the organization can set up specific classes or project depending on the entity of the grant, the aims of the contributor and the target group.

The organization is able to propose an 'activating teaching style' that allows it to satisfy the different needs of each refugee student in order to make its curricula and the refugee integration process more effective.

The curriculum for the training programme is updated every year, generally in September. At the end of the training programme, Patronato San Vincenzo releases a certificate with an official document, as for instance a certificate of attendance.

Official web site: <http://www.afppatronatosv.org/scuola-professionale-2/>.

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Access and entrance requirements/ Support system and coordination/ Learning goals and content

Sustainable demand on the training programme

For Patronato San Vincenzo, it is very important to create links between the vocational training programme and the demand of the labour market. In fact, during the interview, the project manager underlined the importance of all the indicators that are related to an ongoing connection with the labour market—having robust relationships with local entrepreneur and taking into account the situation of the labour market during the planning of the programme are unavoidable premises for an effective training measure and a successful integration path.

In that regard, Patronato San Vincenzo conducts annual planning for the vocational courses and cooperates with other local entities (public administration, religious organizations, enterprises) not only for the setting up of the classes but also for the development of specific vocational and integration projects (at the moment Patronato San Vincenzo is managing a project with Caritas).

Access and entrance requirements

The only requirements to join Patronato's courses are an A2 language level and the age (more than 18 years old) of the student. In any case, it is possible to join the programme with an A1 level also—if the presence of a mentor is guaranteed. Managers examine every application case-by-case. Regarding language level, the strong cooperation with Ruah offers the possibility to delegate the language training for refugee students who want to join Patronato's projects to Ruah's teachers. Regarding the assessment of specific vocational competences, a practical test in Patronato's facilities and laboratories can be proposed to the candidate.

Support system and coordination

As for other projects examined, it is very difficult to provide students with holistic and integrated support, primarily because of the lack of funds and personnel. Patronato San Vincenzo can only provide vocational support during the training, the internship period and the entrance into the labour market process, through the presence of a project tutor. The manager interviewed reported that support in terms of cultural mediation, linguistic assistance and some kind of reimbursement of expenses for long-term internships could be a very effective measure. In any case, the cooperation with Cooperativa Ruah allows Patronato's

managers and teachers to consider not only vocational training but also other possible instances related to the conditions of refugees.

In fact, in the majority of VET school cases do not have enough resources (in terms of funds, personnel, working hours, competences, etc.) to plan for holistic intervention in order to support refugees.

In the case of Patronato San Vincenzo, the cooperation with Ruah is vital because it allows those interventions that are not strictly related to vocational training to be 'delegated'. For example, Ruah's language classes for migrants allow Patronato San Vincenzo to maximise their resource allocation on vocational training and, at the same time, to be sure that they have students with basic linguistic competences.

In addition to this, the cooperation between these two allows them to co-ordinate their efforts—thanks to the link with Ruah, it is easier to find a match between the refugees' training demand and Patronato's VET offers, avoiding waste of resources and facilitating the planning of the training courses.

Moreover, the strong collaboration with an external association can foster the exchange of experience, making refugees' integration path more effective. Of course, such an approach can be seen as a good VET practice example for refugees.

Learning goals and content

The planning of courses occurs annually but is not adapted to the students' previous competences; however, the individual teachers can tailor the curriculum on the basis of the students' level during the first lesson, deciding to focus attention on specific topics. The learning goals and the learning contents are decided in collaboration between the school management and the local employment agencies, considering the current legislation on vocational training courses.

Process: Finance and funding/ Selection of teaching methods/ Learning language and culture

Finance and funding

Patronato San Vincenzo has an economic report and a social report. Their economic regime is a non-profit regime. In order to make economic evaluation more effective, the organization also involves project managers and the municipality—having a shared economic evaluation process is vital because it allows Patronato San Vincenzo to have a comprehensive view and to engage other local entities.

Selection of teaching methods

During the interview, the manager pointed out the importance of the tutors during the training path. In the case of Patronato's courses, the tutors have the task of motivating the students during their internship—they give them support, manage the relationships with the enterprises and monitor students' participation and engagement.

Learning language and culture

Patronato San Vincenzo does not manage the language training of its students—the majority of its applicants come from the Cooperativa Ruah, which sets up the first welcoming of the refugees in the province of Bergamo. In that regard, Ruah provides the language training with particular attention to the cultural and vocational contexts—for example, it organises field trips with volunteers and, during in-class lessons, it gives practical contextualised examples (e.g. everyday language, professional terms, etc.) to participants in order to make learning more effective. Moreover, Ruah teachers are trained with a multicultural teaching method.

Output: Absence and dropout rate/ Certifications and their recognition in their labour market/ Assessment of learning progress

Absence and dropout rate

The dropout rate is very low (around 10–20%) and is always connected to personal issues. In the majority of cases, the students quit the VET programme because they find a stable job. In this case, they can have access to training courses made available by their new employer.

Due to the very low dropout rate, the organization does not set up any strategy in order to reduce it. The manager interviewed noticed that Patronato does not have any dropout problems because of the multiannual training they have available and because the courses are very much in demand and job-related, as well as because, in general, the refugees that join a class are involved in wider integration projects and are thus more motivated and monitored.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Patronato San Vincenzo's management thinks that certifications are vital in order to guarantee an effective link between training and workplace. For this reason, it puts focus on certification of competences and internship periods.

The type of certification that the organization can grant depends on the type of course that the student has joined—for example, the forklift driver class leads to a recognised forklift driver license, while other courses lead to other types of official competence certifications (e.g. the caregiver classes) or only to certification of attendance. All the certificates granted by Patronato San Vincenzo are released by an internal commission—there is no collaboration with external institutions for the competence certifications.

Regarding internships, the tutors that manage the students' traineeship can certify the effective participation of the candidates and their competence acquisition.

Assessment of learning progress

There are written and oral test, as well as ongoing and final tests. All teachers are trained to overcome linguistic barriers and possible prejudice during the evaluation process. Patronato San Vincenzo also gives the possibility of a students' auto-evaluation process.

Accademia per l'integrazione

General description

Accademia per l'integrazione is an experimental project that manages the first welcoming of refugees in the city of Bergamo, focalising on language training, civic education and professional training. The project began in September 2018 and lasts 12 months.

The promoters include the Bergamo town council, Bergamo diocese, Cooperativa Ruah and Confindustria Bergamo (the main industrialist confederation in Italy). The project welcomes 30 asylum seekers (with the aim to extend the service to 60 migrants in its second year and 90 in the third year) from all over the world. The refugees live inside the school facilities and follow a precise daily schedule—they wake up at 6:30 a.m., they tidy up their rooms and they have three hours of language training (20 hours a week) and one hour of professional workshops (e.g. how to use work tools, first aid, etc.). After midday, they work as civilian volunteers around the city, helping in streets and parks in cleaning and other maintenance works. In the first six months of the programme, the focus is placed on language training, while the other six months focus on professional training, in collaboration with Azienda Bergamasca Formazione (ABF) trainers, through an internship managed by Confindustria Bergamo.

ABF is a VET school that manages professional training and job placement in Bergamo. It organises diverse classes for youth and adults, such as:

- carpentry classes at different levels,
- farming-related classes (dairy production),
- technician classes,
- agricultural classes,
- information technology classes,
- catering industry classes and
- machinery classes.

As one of the major VET schools in the Bergamo area, ABF cooperated with the EU consortium on a previous ReSeCo project.

Regarding the ongoing cooperation with Accademia per l'integrazione, ABF organises diverse classes for the 30 refugees hosted by the Accademia to give them the possibility to acquire competences in a specific field. The course type is chosen by focusing on the students' individual attitudes and on the labour market's demand in the province of Bergamo—in that sense, the collaboration with Confindustria Bergamo is vital because it could lead to a better integration with the labour market, promoting the matching between the training offer of the Accademia and the demand for competences of the local industrial base (the province of Bergamo has one of the lowest unemployment rates in Italy so there is a high and very diversified demand for competences).

Moreover, the training includes an internship period in one of Confindustria's enterprises, during which the candidates have a chance to experience how to work in a workplace and to acquire new specific competences while working in the field.

As specified by the Accademia per l'integrazione's manager, the training and the internship period do not ensure recruitment by a company nor a direct entrance into the labour market. Regardless, at the beginning of the programme, the refugees are made aware of this and the entire integration project is presented as an opportunity to integrate in the city life, to learn the Italian language and to improve work competences.

Furthermore, the particularity of the project is that the students, when they join the project, must sign an agreement with the company that testifies their willingness to attend the programme and to follow its rules. The Accademia's manager underlines that this kind of procedure contributes to enhance the motivation of the refugees and helps them to feel accepted.

The entire project is run by seven people not counting the ABF trainers.

Although the project is not directly linked to the labour market and the refugees are not sure about the permanence of their stay in Italy, Accademia per l'integrazione represents an innovation in the Italian refugee welcoming system, providing asylum seekers with the possibility to join a 360° integration programme that includes language training, cultural learning, vocational training and active volunteering.

ABF official website: <http://www.abf.eu/>

(an official website for the Accademia per l'integrazione project does not exist; some information can be found in the update news section of the Bergamo municipality website:

http://www.comune.bergamo.it/servizi/notizie/notizie_homepage.aspx).

Core indicators within the programme

Input: Sustainable demand on the training programme/ Access and entrance requirements/ Learning goals and content/ Contact with students

Sustainable demand on the training programme

From ABF's side, the training offer and the refugee students' demand are equal. On the other hand, the request for competences by the labour market is higher than the ABF training offer—this signals a healthy local labour market with a low unemployment rate and a high need for competences and skilled workers. In the specific case of Accademia per l'integrazione, the demand and the offer are equal because they are coordinated by Cooperativa Ruah, which selects the candidates in order to reach a match. In terms of the request for competences and the training offer, it is very important to underline that one of the main stakeholders is Confindustria—an industrialist confederation it is strongly linked to the local labour market—making Accademia per l'integrazione's training offer effective and connected to the real requests of the local businesses. Having diverse stakeholders on the management board allows the project to widely consider all these aspects during the planning of the curriculum and activities.

Access and entrance requirements

Accademia per l'integrazione has no specific entrance requirements; in fact, during the project, the linguistic training and the vocational training are provided to all students starting from a base level.

The only requirement is motivation to join the programme—the asylum seekers are selected through three different entrance interviews (two with Cooperativa Ruah staff and one with a representative from the municipality). During the interviews, managers evaluate the attitudes and motivations of the candidates and explain the strict rules of the Accademia to them (timetable, code of conduct, learning programme, etc.). The access is subject to the signing, by the refugee students, of a precise 'educational agreement' that demonstrates their acceptance of the Accademia's rules, further testifying to their motivation to join the programme.

Learning goals and content

In general, during the planning of the training courses for adults, the ABF constantly takes into consideration the situation in the labour market to provide an assorted offer of classes that could match the students' demand for training and the labour market's request for competences.

Regarding ABF's collaboration with Accademia per l'integrazione, the learning goals and content of the training classes are adapted to the specific requests of the local labour market. This adaptability is possible, as mentioned above, due to the cooperation with Confindustria, which is strictly connected to the local businesses and has the possibility to better understand their employee and specific competence needs. Since Accademia per l'integrazione is a newborn project, the management does not have a precise timetable regarding curriculum updates; although the learning content was checked during the first four months of the project in order to adapt it to the real needs of the students.

Contact with students

The first contact with refugees is led by Ruah managers and municipality representatives. In this manner, when the training measure begins (six months after the beginning of the project, as mentioned above), the ABF trainers deal with motivated students who have already worked in the programme.

Process: Learning language and culture/ Selection of teaching methods

Learning language and culture

Accademia per l'integrazione provides an entrance language test (which does not influence admission) in order to testify to the students' competences. The language training is conducted during the initial six months of the programme, prior to the beginning of the vocational classes. Thus, the students should have an adequate language level when the vocational training starts. In particular, language training is the main objective of Accademia per l'integrazione, which sets up specific classes and activities that are relevant not only for language acquisition but also for the acquisition of all those cultural codes that are vital to ensure a full and effective integration.

Selection of teaching methods

As mentioned above, during the project, the students live together in the school facilities and, therefore, they have the possibility to study together, to share experiences and to cooperate. The Accademia's manager reports that this is very important because it fosters their motivation, allowing them to feel accepted and to be part of a group. Furthermore, the daily stay at the school allows teachers to create strong connections with students, to understand their needs and how to activate their motivation, and to make them aware of possible failings during the learning process and how to deal with them.

The students' motivation is also activated through activities that are not strictly linked to learning—for instance, voluntary services that which provide the students with the possibility to meet Italian citizens and feel useful to the community.

Output: Absence and dropout rate/ Assessment of learning progress/ Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

Absence and dropout rate

It is not possible to evaluate the dropout rate at Accademia per l'integrazione because the project is still ongoing (for the first four months, no one has left the school). Nevertheless, it is important to notice that there is a very strict code of conduct (to motivate the students and make them feel accepted and

empowered), which students have to follow to remain in the project. Despite this, the Accademia per l'integrazione's manager reports that the managers, tutors and trainers are willing to consider the refugee students' needs and to modify some rules to foster their motivation and reduce possible dropout risks.

Assessment of learning progress

Learning progress is measured through formal assessment (oral and written tests), with constant feedback from teachers and tutors.

During the internship, an external evaluation from the enterprises is provided—this kind of evaluation involves both the tutors and businesses but also Confindustria, which manages the entire process.

It is also important to underline that living together on the school premises allows the students to create a strong group—and such a cooperative environment makes co-working, idea and experience exchanges possible, creating a collective auto-evaluation process that could foster student learning and motivation.

Certifications and their recognition in the labour market

The competences are evaluated during the first encounter but ongoing assessments also take place, which allow the managers and teachers to monitor the students' progress (linguistic and vocational competences, social skills, motivation). Accademia per l'integrazione has mid-term certificates of participation, allowing them to certify the students' engagement—for example, after the first month of lessons, the tutors award the students with their first diploma. At the end of the project, the students will receive a certificate that will certify their participation, involvement and competence acquisition.

Regarding competence evaluation and certification Accademia per l'integrazione involves the local businesses (during the internship in particular).