

Maren Gag, Joachim Schroeder

Refugee Monitoring in Hamburg – first steps taken!

The academic discussion on establishment of a transnational European educational area is particularly important in view of increased mobility of refugees, who have no regular access to education or the job market due to exclusion mechanisms. Discussion was held within the European partnership on the question of what educational steering instruments should be developed, and what steering media can be identified in VET (Vocational Education and Training) beyond national borders, giving a transnational dimension to educational careers. However, the instruments for asylum seekers, persons with “tolerated” status and refugees are rudimentary at most, due to the specific features of European asylum and refugee policies; a concept was therefore developed in Hamburg to examine the impact of migration processes on refugees, specifically in VET (Gag, Schroeder 2011).

The following sections describe and comment on the first steps in implementation of the *Refugee Monitoring* concept in Hamburg. The central focus is on procedures to prepare a VET report on the situation of young refugees in the Hamburg transitional system from school to vocation, on the contents and on the recommendations derived from reporting (Gag, Schroeder 2012). The last section analyses the multiple elements of Hamburg stabilisation strategy, aimed at implementation of monitoring and educational reporting on this marginalised group in Hamburg. The concept and implementation strategy may also serve as examples for other European cities.

1. Lack of educational monitoring of the target group

The use of tools for systematic monitoring and regular educational reporting has now been introduced in Germany at the level of the Federation and of individual Laender, and in a number of municipalities, as a standard method to improve steering in various policy areas. Inter-state initiatives have also been launched in the context of implementing the Federal Government’s national integration plan, in order to move forward with development of common indicators and to harmonise monitoring processes, to evaluate the goal setting of the Laender for improved integration and education policy.

It is urgently necessary to monitor specifically the target group of refugees and asylum seekers¹, especially in view of key changes in German refugee policy. Tolerated refugees are increasingly being included in integration policy measures. At the same time, it is becoming clear that the participation of refugees in education and employment is still an experimental field. In particular, there is a need for considerable improvement in the use of the standard instruments, in order to provide effective support. It is also apparent in the municipal integration concepts that these are generally aimed exclusively at immigrants who live in Germany legally and on a permanent basis. This integration policy guideline, which is supported by currently valid residence law (S. 43 I Residence Act [AufenthG]) prevents recent integration support initiatives for refugees, tolerated persons and asylum seekers funded by the Federation and the Laender. They have no legal status of residence within the meaning of the Residence Act, but they have an official document which certifies their legitimate status (“toleration”) and thus their legal residence in Germany, which has in some

¹ The term “refugee” is not to be understood in the legal sense of persons recognised as refugees, but as immigrants who have *fled* to Germany, that is asylum seekers, persons with “tolerated” status and persons with leave to stay granted on humanitarian grounds.

cases already lasted for many years. As long as the legal reforms of recent times, which are aimed at educational participation and labour market integration of people with precarious status of residence, are still in conflict with the dominant political mainstream, continued efforts are needed to make the life situations and conditions of refugees visible, at least at the present stage of the debate within society, because at present they are a hidden group among immigrants.

Regardless of the need to facilitate lifelong learning, youth is still a vital lifestage for obtaining educational qualifications, for stepwise approach to the world of work, for the establishment of concrete ideas on vocational future, and for entry into the employment system. Reference is made in the international discussion of education to the fact that today about fifteen years of education and training are needed to obtain the basic educational status required for action in a globalised world (Schroeder/Seukwa 2007). It is particularly difficult for refugees to complete this lengthy period of education, because their biographic development means they live in different places, in different countries, and they do not have the time to complete the institutionally formalised sequence of educational steps without interruptions. In Germany they were denied the right to vocational training over many years, and the new ordering of policy with changes in the law has not yet brought about a systematic paradigm shift in policy and administrative practice; it is therefore desirable for participation of refugees in education and the labour market to be taken up as an indicator for the assessment of integration policy in Hamburg and in educational reporting.

The specific characteristics of European asylum and refugee policy mean that in Germany the instruments for quantitative and qualitative data collection are at most rudimentary for asylum seekers, tolerated persons and refugees, but not in such a way as to give effective and practical support to the local, national and overall European steering policies. In some major European cities, positive experience has already been gathered with *Ethnic Monitoring*, but asylum seekers, tolerated persons and refugees are normally not included in these projects. The requisite data on people who have fled from their countries of origin is often difficult to collect, and most of the German Laender have specific conditions for access of refugees to social benefits, so this is often not included in the usual procedures for social reporting. Thus it may be assumed that the basic conditions have not yet been created for regular *Refugee Monitoring* – this certainly applies at least for Hamburg; experience and insights from migration research can be used, but have to be re-adapted to this target group.

The *Refugee Monitoring* concept was drawn up in connection with the many years of integration policy efforts for participation of tolerated refugees and asylum seekers in the Hamburg networking project FLUCHTort Hamburg (SAFE HAVEN Hamburg) and the related partner projects; its aim is to achieve continuous monitoring of the effectiveness of an extended integration policy in Hamburg (Gag/Schroeder 2011). The goal is to implement a monitoring process and regular educational reporting which includes the group of refugees in Hamburg. The proposals for a pilot project were put forward at a workshop discussion in Hamburg in June 2011, with participation of numerous experts from authorities, schools and refugee facilities. The central result was the decision that instead of a comprehensive educational report, which would at present hardly be feasible to prepare, individual reports should be published in an “unstructured sequence”, covering subjects of immediate concern. Great interest was expressed by the principals of a number of vocational schools, which are the locations of the educational programmes for refugees and are affected by the reorganisation of the school/vocation transitional system, and they would like to work on preparation of a theme-based educational report of this kind, which would be the first of the series.

2. Reporting – the situation of young refugees in Hamburg’s school/employment transition system

The transition system from school to employment was fundamentally restructured in Hamburg in 2011, but young refugees, often entering Germany as unaccompanied minors, and getting into the school system by lateral entry as asylum seekers or as tolerated persons, attend schools outside of this reformed system.²

They attend two vocational preparation programmes located at vocational schools, exclusively aimed at young people with migration background, defined as follows in the law:

- The vocational preparation year for migrants (BVJ-M) whose knowledge, skills and abilities in the German language are not sufficient to participate with prospects of success in the educational programmes of the BVJ (vocational preparation year); the BVJ-M lasts two school years in full-time attendance (§2 (2) APO-BVS).³
- The preparation year for school students whose language of origin is not German, and whose stay in the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany is of temporary nature, particularly on the basis of leave to stay or toleration (VJ-M); the VJ-M lasts two school years in full-time attendance (§2 (3) APO-BVS).

At year end 2011/2012 there were more than 750 young refugees in Hamburg, concentrated in special-needs classes at nine vocational schools. Forecasts indicate that this figure could double in the coming years. The specific needs of the target group, the lack of data and of tools for data collection, and the impossibility of planning immigration face the educational service and the vocational schools with great challenges – they are trying to plan admission to the school system without long waiting times and to plan education in a flexible way in accordance with needs and to ensure appropriate provision of teaching. The structural difficulties cannot be compensated by existing positive approaches and specific knowledge of refugees at certain school locations. The reform of the transition system has made the inadequacies of this form of schooling particularly clear, and some of the problems have been made worse by the new organisational structure.

The core of the reform is the reorganisation of the transition from school to vocational activity, focusing on preparation for vocational training (AV) by implementation of dual places of learning (curricular orientation towards the dual system and the conditions of vocational training in Hamburg) and by support in the transitional phase.⁴ But, regrettably, the relevant documents and concepts do not examine whether it is legally possible for young people going into vocational schools without knowledge of German, and in particular for refugees and asylum seekers, to start and maintain and successfully complete participation in the reformed AV system; they do not consider whether this possibility is permitted by organisation and plausible in terms of its content.

² Bürgerschaft (Parliament) of the City of Hamburg, Communication by Senate to Bürgerschaft: Measures for implementation of vocational training in Hamburg, docs. 19/6273 of 2/7/2010 and 19/8472 of 18/01/11.

³ APO BVS = Training and examination regulations for Vocational Preparation Schools, 22/07/2011.

⁴ Bürgerschaft (Parliament) of the City of Hamburg, doc. 19/8472.

The legal restrictions, which were specifically the basis of the introduction of the VJ-M, have successively been removed in the legislation at Federal and state level in recent years. After one year of stay in Germany, young refugees and asylum seekers are increasingly given more opportunities to make use of their rights to education and to participate in training and in the job market. After one year, they have a subsidiary right of access to the labour market, and after four years they have unrestricted access to the labour market. With this in mind, further development is needed in terms of function and design of the BVJ-M and VJ-M courses at vocational schools, especially as the Hamburg Senate explicitly includes this target group in new orientation of the Hamburg action concept for immigrants.

2.1. Procedure for preparation of report

In order to implement the pilot project, a number of preliminary talks have been held with head teachers, heads of department and some teachers to collect initial assessments of the difficulties in implementation of reform of the transition system in education courses for refugees. The relevant documents (Hamburg Parliament documents, curricula, ordinances) have also been collected, and also statistical material. We have drawn up a survey concept on this basis and presented it at the vocational schools. Contacts were made with all five vocational schools where such courses were provided in the survey period (October to December 2011).

A total of thirteen teachers participated (mostly heads of classes) and six school head teacher and heads of department at three school locations. As mentioned previously, the intention was *not* to evaluate the pedagogical work in the two courses, but rather to identify assessments and experience of the teachers with respect to implementation difficulties in the reform of the transition system from school to vocation and problems of fit of the education courses to the needs of young refugees. We held problem oriented discussions at the participating schools in two separate groups – in the first discussion round we talked to the head teachers of the schools and the heads of department for these courses, with a particular focus on the organisational, infrastructural and school policy problems. In the second round we talked to the teachers in these courses, focusing on pedagogical matters.

The range of subjects covered the specific support needs of young school-age refugees with unsecured status of stay, the curriculum and arrangements for teaching, the importance of learning a second language, vocational orientation, cooperation with external players, the perspectives for stay of the school students, the role of the school administration and supervisory body, the available materials and human resources, and the supply and demand for continuing education of teachers. The interviews were conducted on the basis of guidelines which we developed for structuring, but in the course of the interviews we naturally permitted deviations from it.

Following the interviews at the schools, further interviews were conducted with persons having various functions in the organisation and implementation of courses for refugees – two representatives of the Informationszentrum (IZ) (Information Centre) at the Hamburger Institut für Berufliche Bildung (HIBB) (Hamburg Institute of Vocational Education), which advises young people on education courses and programmes of the vocational schools, taking special account of young people with and without junior high school certificate and young migrants. The IZ is an establishment of HIBB and is responsible for the Hamburg state vocational schools, as an institution of the Hamburg Schools and Vocational Education

Ministry. A representative of the Landesinstitut für Lehrerbildung und Schulentwicklung (LI) (Hamburg Institute of Teacher Training and School Development) was also involved, holding responsibility for the transition phase from school to vocation in the department of 'Vocational Education' (LIF 23), and from February 2012 the schools supervision unit at HIBB responsible for such programmes at HIBB (HI 16, Unit for Transition School to Employment).

All the interviews were recorded and in parallel to this notes were taken, and subsequently a transcription was made. The first evaluation step was that we reconstructed the subjects which were mentioned frequently or only occasionally in the interviews, and thus obtained an overview of the material as a whole. We then set out what we thought would be an appropriate structure for the report, and allocated the transcription extracts to the relevant subject areas. We had previously agreed with the interviewees that we would not include verbatim and/or named extracts from the interviews, but would present the evaluations given in a generalised, summary reporting mode. This approach was designed to identify the problem areas in the redesign of the transitional system and to generate proposals for further development.

This evaluation step enabled us to derive a number of recommendations, but we felt that an extension of reporting was needed to embed the results in overall contexts. Firstly, because we wanted to capture some of the impact of the reform on the young refugees themselves. But it was not possible to conduct interviews with them because this report was prepared without the provision of any kind of funding. Analysis of the subsequent situation would in any case have been premature at the time of the survey, because there were hardly any students who had completed the new courses. That is why we made use of biographical reconstructions compiled in the course of the many years of practical experience of the Hamburg networks. They give impressions of the life situations and conditions of young refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg, who have received preparation and support in the projects. They show different courses of educational and employment biographies, whereby participation in an education programme was one of the stages in their individual development. They also show a clear influence of the structural policy standards on the chances of individuals to make use of their development potentials. We also prepared an overview of the status of research, and gave comments on the available empirical studies on the life situations and educational careers of refugees living in Hamburg.

Finally, we felt it would be useful to include at least a brief comparison with the educational policy measures in other major cities (Berlin, Cologne, Munich) for assessment of results and formulation of recommendations.

2.2. Summary: content of educational report and recommendations for implementation

The report published in May 2012 analyses the impact of the reform of the school/employment transition system on young refugees living in Hamburg. It presents analyses on issues of structural and pedagogical fit of the education and training courses for asylum seekers and tolerated persons. It also examines the practice of allocation and placement of the young people and organisational, administrative and legal difficulties. The analyses are put in concrete form using the educational biographies of refugees who have gone through the Hamburg school system. These biographies have been reconstructed in the framework of various research work and in practical networking. We also considered how such courses are

organised in other cities in Germany, in order to get some ideas for practice in Hamburg. Finally, we summarise the results of the analysis and present recommendations for changes in the education programmes.

The report demonstrates that numerous difficulties arise in everyday school operations because of the considerable problems of pedagogical fit between the courses, with insufficient equipment, with educational goal conflicts, with inconsistent curricular concepts, with lack of flexibility and coherence in the examination rules, and with shortcomings in implementation of vocational preparation and language support; all of this is due to the fact that these programmes are not tailored to the learning status and life situation of the young people. There are also additional factors which have an impact on implementation of the courses – they include the organisational and administrative position of the courses at HIBB, the complex legal conditions applicable to the situation of asylum seekers and tolerated persons. These problems reduce the achievement of the educational goals of the current Hamburg Senate, which declare that “no-one should be left behind”, and “no qualification without prospects of employment”. On the contrary, there are massive obstacles in the way of such young people making use of their right to education, as they are on the margins of society in various respects. The conclusions drawn from this by the authors of the report are as follows:

A separate educational programme needs to be kept at the vocational schools for further concept improvement and for organisation of an appropriate vocational preparation programme for this target group, giving young lateral entrants without knowledge of the German language and with insecure status of stay opportunities to catch up on school qualifications and to enter the Hamburg education system with the option of follow-up programmes, and enabling them to achieve seamless transition to the world of work; this programme needs to be re-organised in its structure and curricula, and should have the same resources as the training preparation programme (AV).

Detailed recommendations are as follows:

Firstly: extend the age limits for school attendance

Compulsory schooling and the right to schooling are at present linked with age and with attainment of legal status of majority, as prescribed in the Education Act. That should not be applied to this group. Instead, rules should be set up to take account of the individual’s time actually spent in education. The period of compulsory schooling set out in the Hamburg Education Act, that is eleven years of school attendance, should be extended to include young refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, so that they can achieve their potentials despite gaps in their educational careers resulting from migration.

Secondly: set up a VET programme which is flexible in time and modularised in content

A two- or three-year “AV-M” should be set up for equal opportunities of young refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, with the same formal goals as the AV but a completely different organisational structure (flexible module principle). A good fit is needed in the educational programmes for the individual developments for rights of stay, social obstacles, and diversity of starting conditions for learning. In order to achieve that, the vocational schools need school policy conditions enabling them to provide different education and qualification modules adapted to teaching migrants, so that they can obtain qualification credits and get certification for them – *language modules* (literacy, basic German language education, promotion of languages of country of origin, German at the workplace); *basic modules relevant to everyday life* (coping with everyday requirements, going to official departments, health, housing,

financial skills, how to deal with discrimination and racism, etc.); *basic modules relevant to the world of work* (key skills for industry and commerce); *practical modules* (stage-by-stage dualisation of places of learning at workshops / vocational schools and placements within the primary employment market); *examination modules* (time-limited preparation for examinations, in order to obtain school leaving certificates); *transition modules* (intensive school and social support for transition to employment).

Thirdly: adjust organisational framework of VET programme

The Hamburg Department of Education should provide sufficient resources for the education programme to take on a realistic bridging function, enabling young refugees, asylum seekers and other young people with migration background to pursue their educational path.

- *Clarification of responsibilities:* It is necessary to compensate for the delay in reforms for the BVJ-M and VJ-M programmes by setting up goal agreements which define the areas of responsibility more clearly.
- *Removal of distinction between “BVJ” and “VJ”:* The distinction between the two educational programmes BVJ-M and VJ-M is already removed de facto in a number of vocational schools, because it is difficult to make a precise distinction in status of residence between two groups of migrants, and because it causes problems in school organisation, and makes no sense in terms of teaching. Separate programmes for refugees and migrants with secured status of stay are no longer justifiable due to the changes in the legal framework conditions, and should therefore be abolished in the law as soon as possible.
- *Fair measurement of needs:* In order to achieve equality in terms of measurement of needs with other standards applicable for educational programmes in the Hamburg school system, the basic frequency and basic number of hours of teaching should be set at the same level as for vocational training preparation (basic frequency: 13, basic hours: 30) and training support (4 basic hours per ten students). The curriculum provides for a total of 1,475 basic hours for AV (one year), so 2,950 module hours should be estimated for “AV-M” (two years).
- *Revision of examination regulations:* The examination regulations in the AV programme for acquisition of junior secondary school certificate are based on the assumption that a nine-year general education course has been completed in Hamburg. This standard cannot be applied to lateral entrance. It is therefore necessary to develop an examination which corresponds to their needs and the subject matter of a course which covers two or at most three years, which is conducted on a modular basis, and which has a large proportion of practical elements related to the world of work. As the vocational schools now already take on new students continuously in the course of the school year, the examination dates also need flexibility in timing.
- *Revision of curricula:* In the course of merging the two programmes BVJ-M and VJ-M, the currently valid curricula should be developed into a joint curriculum, which is tailored to the life situations of refugees and asylum seekers. This should be done independently of whether a modularisation system is applied in the new organisation of AV-M. It is recommended that the curricula already developed in other states of Germany should be carefully studied and adapted to the conditions in Hamburg.
- *Preparation course:* Entry into vocational preparation should be preceded by a module for language/literacy development, giving the students the basic language skills, as is also included in the framework for integration of immigrant children and young people in regular school classes. The scope should be based on the specifications of

the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and on the integration courses for young adults, and should comprise 960 teaching units.

Fourthly: ensure placement and support

In order to set up an educational programme appropriate to life situation, it is essential to hold a detailed survey and get an accurate description of the individual life situations of the young refugees, so that corresponding social interventions can be provided for stabilisation.

- *Data collection on life situations and skills:* In order to achieve the most systematic and comprehensive clarification of the up-to-date, individual life situations of students, it is recommended to work at first-point-of-contact institutions, youth assistance services, schools and the IZ of the HIBB, using standardised or mutually harmonised survey methods, which make it possible to find out what happens to the students after completing their programme. To make placement in training or employment easier, it is suggested that the experience gathered, at least in the employment-related sector, should be documented in the form of portfolios. The work experience gathered could thus be made more visible, and would optimise the chances of follow-up employment.
- *Learning support and social monitoring:* It is vitally important to develop or provide the expertise for advice or support to clients at the planned youth job centres. As with the other reform projects in Hamburg, individual learning support staff and social workers should be integrated into the programme, to take account of the special needs of refugees and asylum seekers. The preparation of young refugees for training can be improved by close links between teaching and intensive counselling and support.

Fifthly: strengthen and expand school organisation cooperation structures

Changes at structural level are needed to minimise disadvantage effects and to ensure that young refugees can make use of their educational rights, and that nobody is left behind.

- *Cooperation:* Networking should be expanded and cooperation links with the relevant organisations should be institutionalised in order to facilitate handling of teaching paradoxes due to complex and difficult legal situations, and to improve cooperation with external refugee services and players. Apart from improved cooperation of the teaching staff with refugee institutions in individual cases, the youth job agencies should ensure that they include refugee specific counselling within the planned counselling centres (“under the same roof”), and get the necessary funding to secure this, in order to stabilise the situation.
- *Expert Council:* Establishment of an Expert Council is proposed in order to make use of synergy effects; it should support the changeover process of the transition system for this target group and it should input into the public debate and to political forums the results of future monitoring in refugee and migration work, with the participation of external experts from academic circles and out-of-school practice. Other cities in Germany could also be involved here.

Sixthly: implement targeted continuing VET campaign

Targeted human resources development among teachers and other teaching staff working at the vocational schools is needed for reform of the two education programmes addressed here. The teaching and management staff of these programmes should be included in this skill

building initiative. School related and inter-school support measures should also be provided with the participation of various departments of the LI.

- *Language support and basic education:* Comprehensive, long-term teaching provisions have to be set up in particular for appropriate implementation of literacy support, to counteract the shortage of teaching staff with skills in teaching German as a foreign language in the VET sector.
- *Quality development:* Inter-school cooperation should be strengthened in order to include 'new' school sites in the exchange of experience and to improve quality development. That requires provision of sufficient resources in the form of working time and supporting staff for cooperation and expert services. Reorientation of the programmes could be supported by examination of existing approaches, concepts, tools and teaching materials for refugee-sensitive schooling and support.

Seventhly: institutionalise refugee-related education reporting

It is recommended to implement regular empirical educational reporting to examine the educational policy targets of the Senate related to young refugees, and to document results. This should also continuously show the obstacles for the target group to access and continuation, and transition to vocational training, and indicate prospective needs for action and control to school administration and policy makers. Suitable data collection tools and indicators are provided in the annex to the Education Report (May 2012), to aggregate data on a non-personal basis. Data collection should be carried out by the planned youth job centres, and the Institute of Education Monitoring should include the results in future education reports.

3. Stages on the way to stabilisation

To illustrate the stabilisation strategy pursued by the FLUCHTort Hamburg network for sustainable establishment of the monitoring concept, the following texts show some details from the practical activities for mainstreaming, associated with implementation of the Monitoring concept, and aimed at establishing a binding reporting system in Hamburg (and elsewhere). At the present time it cannot be expected that specific results will be demonstrated and successes reported. The objective is rather to show what tools and methods are suitable, and on what paths initiatives can be launched, stages pursued, and existing networking structures expanded.

3.1. Reform cannot be implemented without active participation of the vocational schools

The school management and teaching staff at the sites concerned are an important basis for implementation of the proposed reform changes which go with the recommendations in the education report. In other words, a reform without commitment on the part of the vocational schools is not realistic, because operationalisation of individual proposals for a range of school organisation requirements and pedagogical and methodological changes at the school call for a decisive will for reform in order to achieve complete re-orientation. A key foundation stone in this process was laid with the result of the Workshop Discussion in June 2011, where the concept of *Refugee Monitoring* was presented to experts in Hamburg and to representatives of the Hamburg authorities, and on this occasion the project was taken up as positive by some of the school principals, to play an active part in preparation of a (first) educational report. A

concept group, comprising a number of school principals and a representative of the LI, already gave active support to the working process of reporting, and was also the first forum dealing with results, and using them as a practical correction device for further procedure. A first milestone was that reporting and the recommendations derived from it were given a positive assessment, and seen as support for their own efforts vis-à-vis their own institution to call for reform processes for the two educational programmes.

Two working tools provided with the education report illustrate by way of example simple data collection methods with which (1) life situations can be determined in the course of the educational process, and (2) indicators which could be used as the framework for determination of data for a long-term monitoring process, in order to build follow-up reporting on that:

- A profile sheet (1), which collects and updates data on the person, place of residence, status of stay and work permit, school certificates obtained (in country of origin or in other countries), on language knowledge, and on collection of their social benefits, should be used in a standardised way by everyone involved in the schooling and support process, particularly in order to record their transition to further programmes and their progress.
- Selection of the proposed indicators (2) for ‘refugee sensitive’ monitoring ensured that the necessary effort for development of the tools and the work effort for data collection are kept to a minimum, and that the survey design is adapted to the processes which are regularly used in Hamburg for reporting:

Indicator	Relevance / Goal
Students required to attend vocational school	To get more detailed knowledge of refugee backgrounds, life situations in countries of origin, etc. To take account of cultural/faith backgrounds
Students at each site, on entry and exit from the educational programme	Make better use of scope for use of educational rights, get support for admission. Pay attention to securing of status of stay in the process, because that can give more educational rights
Recipients of benefits under SGB II (Social Code) or Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz (AsylLG) (Asylum Seekers Benefits Act)	Make use of scope to get funding, in order to compensate for disadvantages
Housing situation	Eliminate disadvantages, finding different accommodation especially for families with children and young people. These conditions make it difficult to ensure school attendance and participation in training and the employment market
Forms of family and living	Reduce disadvantages for the increasing proportion of under-age unaccompanied refugees
Special educational needs/high proportion of young people with migration background who need funding	Ensure support in keeping with life situation, arrange transitions better
Lateral entrants without knowledge of German up to Grade 9/10 (in preparatory programmes at primary and district schools, for transition to standard classes)	Ensure support in keeping with life situation, arrange transitions better
Language of origin	Make resource for lifelong learning visible, make world of work visible, create support programmes
Health	Support in provision of appropriate support offers

Subsequent: placement in dual training, placement in funded training, placement in school education, placement in counselling	Gain in knowledge of operation of reforms and determination of needs for change
Cooperation with external partners	Strengthen stabilisation strategy

3.2. “Reward effort by providing places”

Those were the words of the Mayor of Hamburg, when he visited FLUCHTort Hamburg in March 2012 to find out about the successes and problems of networking for vocational integration of refugees and asylum seekers. In the course of the discussion, contributions were made not only by the network partners, but also by two employers and two trainees, reporting on their experience in training. This subject is on the political agenda in Hamburg, as shown by the Mayor’s statement and by the new orientation of the Hamburg Action Concept for integration of immigrants in favour of participation of refugees and asylum seekers. So the conditions are good to demand the necessary reforms of the educational programmes BVJ-M and VJ-M. It is necessary to identify numerous people responsible for the specialist aspects, and policy decision makers within the administration, and other relevant persons outside of the institutions, in order to get problem analyses on the educational situation in Hamburg’s transition system into the experts’ debate and to persuade people of what is needed. Comprehensive reorientation of these educational programmes and the acceptance of reporting may be seen as specific indicators of the political will to redirect the Hamburg Action Concept for integration, in favour of participation of refugees and asylum seekers, on an inter-disciplinary basis.

The FLUCHTort Hamburg network not only has to do a lot of persuasion work in the coming period, but also to develop cooperation with numerous players in VET, the employment market, the Hamburg Ministries, and also with stakeholders in practice and research, to move the subject forward in the expert and academic debate. The Hamburger Aktionsbündnis für Bildung und Beschäftigung (Hamburg Action Alliance for Education and Employment), comprising high-ranking representatives of Ministries, the Job Centre, social institutions and the Confederation of Industry, is involved in the vocational integration of disadvantaged young people at the political level in Hamburg, and their support is also needed. Their attention must be drawn to this target group, because the aim in Hamburg is “not to lose any of the young people in the transition to training”.⁵

3.3. Closing research gaps – Refugee Monitoring in the social space

In the course of discussion about the necessity of monitoring for refugees in Hamburg, a research group has also been set up with the HafenCity University (Urban Planning) and the University of Hamburg (Educational Sciences), to develop a research project together with the departments integrated in three Hamburg districts for ‘Integrated Social Planning’ and passage.

The planned project is to operate under the working title of “FLUCHTORT STADT” (“SAFE HAVEN CITY”), and develop and test a social space monitoring process, examining activities in employment, education and residence. The goal is to determine and analyse the

⁵ Bürgerschaft der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg: Einrichtung einer Jugendberufsagentur (Establishment of a youth jobs centre) doc. 20/4195 of 15/05/2012

life situations of refugees in the residential areas and to derive action approaches from that. Data-based observation of areas will be used to track selected statistical and socio-economic data and thus follow the development of specific areas of the city, and to make an assessment on the basis of a specially designed index method, in order to identify special problem situations. Qualitative data will be collected on an exemplary basis on participation of refugees in urban social life in three districts in Hamburg, and this will be supplemented by comparison with other cities in Germany that have already agreed to participate: Berlin, Munich, Bremen and Leipzig. The perspective of the cities gives further important requirements for action, because integration of refugees is an important basis for peaceful co-existence between indigenous and immigrant population. In addition, ethnic diversity is increasingly seen as a potential for social, cultural and economic development in cities, in an ever more globalised world. This diversity can be used by the districts to secure location benefits for themselves versus other cities. Considering the burden on public budgets, it is also advisable for the municipalities to avoid producing additional costs by non-integration, that is by excluding sub-groups of the urban population with migration background.

This project is thus based on the status of existing research work in Hamburg and can at the same time close a research gap, because the life situation of refugees in German cities has in the past been practically ignored by research. The approaches for action to be formulated here can also lead to improved integration and participation in the social area, and transfer to other major German or European cities, which are currently the primary immigration destination of many international refugees because of their political and economic characteristics.

The academic discourse is of the greatest importance for urban practice, because it is reflected more comprehensively, the development of perspectives is subjected to critical analysis, and because recommendations for implementation and reform projects are supported by theory-based approaches. A research project on the *city* as a living space, and on the right to participation of refugees and asylum seekers, can make an important contribution here, particularly in the context of the new integration policy orientation of the City of Hamburg, which aims to include this group.

New stimuli can also be established at other locations in Germany by participation of additional cities. That means the work of the networks based there, which is funded together with FLUCHTort Hamburg from the Federal ESF programme for persons having a right to stay, can be expanded and useful synergy effects can be obtained. The Federal thematic network *Asylum*, which currently interlinks 28 funded project groups, with 230 individual projects, is an important forum for exchange of experience and transfer of proven models from practice and research.

3.4. Summary

The process for implementation of continuous monitoring and reporting on the life situation of refugees is being accomplished in small steps in Hamburg. Despite the integration policy acceptance of the subject of refugees and asylum seekers, which are no longer to be separated as a specific group among the migrants in Hamburg, the authorities react very sceptically to the demand to examine the effectiveness of integration policy reorientation. Many arguments are put forward for this – due to the difficulty of insufficient data available to the authorities, conditions for data protection in the import and export of inter-ministerial assessments, and lack of transparency in existing educational reports so that their thematic coverage cannot be

extended. And it may also be suspected that there are concerns about too much collection of data on the life situations and conditions of the refugees living in Hamburg, due to structural exclusion mechanisms, the elimination of which is likely to require expenditure of additional funds.

The Hamburg network is following a political strategy of establishing equality of opportunity, for the benefit of refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg and in other German and European cities (and regions), and is thereby following up on the guidelines issued by the EU for harmonisation of monitoring systems and common development of output and result indicators, calling for better evaluation of the measures in the member states at EU level. These guidelines are also to be seen in the context of the Europe 2020 goals, which set out specific strategic goals and measures in the various policy areas, to achieve promotion of employment, education and training, and combating poverty with more collaboration between the various fields of policy. Migrants/persons of foreign origin and the members of minorities are explicitly mentioned as a target group for *social inclusion* in the member states.⁶ Thus the introduction of a monitoring system for refugees in Hamburg and elsewhere not only contributes to improving structure for the respective educational and consulting work, and to sound educational planning, but also provides additional knowledge to shape a European educational area where refugees and asylum seekers are already moving around within Europe.

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⁶ European Commission: European Social Fund (ESF) 2014-2020, Proposed Regulation. Brussels 2012; Communiqué of the European ministers responsible for vocational training, the European Social Partners and the European Commission: the Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training for the period 2011-2020. Version of 7 December 2010.