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The EduAsyl project

Background and objectives

The Equal programme made possible one of the most ambitious common European efforts to improve the systems for reception and integration of asylum seekers and refugees in the Member states. More than 100 projects (Development Partnerships) were carried out in the MSs, i.a. aiming at improvements of the access to VET systems for asylum seekers and refugees and, in due course, integration on the labour market and in the society.

The project has presented a unique possibility to follow up what happened to a selection of participants in the Equal programmes for asylum seekers and refugees in the field of Vocational and Educational Training (VET) and integration. The University of Hamburg, in cooperation with partners from four European cities, has received funding from the Leonardo da Vinci-programme in order to study the VET and integration systems in place, the role of the Equal interventions and, last but not least, to follow the pathways taken by the participants in their journeys/careers towards integration on the labour market.

In order to capture the pathways, biographies and careers of the participants - in relation to the VET and integration systems and project interventions - interviews have been made with a limited number of asylum seekers and refugees in the five cities. The reception/integration and VET systems will be described and analyzed through desk studies and interviews with staff/functionaries in both formal and non-formal organizations.

This will give answers to questions like: How are the systems described by the parties concerned? What are the good/bad experiences? What works/what does not work? Recommendations for improvements? Which are the pathways to the labour market? Which are the pathways "outside" the regular systems? Can "irregular" pathways lead to integration on the regular labour market? What is the role of the informal labour market/informal "systems" for reception/introduction?

By this double perspective - the viewpoint of the target group as well as the representatives of the regular (formal and non-formal as well as informal) reception and integration systems - we will be able to indicate/assess the performance of the systems and, to some extent, the (Equal) project interventions.

As to the case of Sweden the study is of particular interest, since there have been extensive changes in the systems and policies for reception/introduction/integration in the last years. Also in other MSs there have been developments and shifts in systems and policies, as well as on EU-level. The EduAsyl project gives - although in a limited scale - a unique possibility to analyze and compare these systems and their functioning in four European cities - Hamburg, Gothenburg, Glasgow, and Florence.



Integration Refugees into the European educational and labour market: Requirements for a target oriented approach (EduAsyl)

Summary

In recent years, legal parameters have been created for a partial opening of the educational and labour markets for refugees and asylum seekers in the EU, enabling their integration into the employment system. Social research has demonstrated that the employment biographies of migrants tend to proceed transnationally. Combining intercultural and lifelong learning approaches, this project investigates whether local, national and European education and employment market policy allows the integration of refugees, using their transnational biography as resource.

The project analyse educational and employment paths at five cities in different EU countries. The goal is to develop innovative and transferable solutions which accelerate the opening up of basic education, language education, trainings and higher education systems to refugees thus enabling their effective participation to lifelong learning process. In each of the project location existing practice, local VET-policies and structural barriers will be exchanged and analysed. With regard to the objectives of the Leonardo da Vinci programme the project focus the support improvements quality and innovation in vocational education and training systems, institutions and practices. The outcomes and recommendations developed have an impact on lifelong learning strategies that interconnect the different strands of education related to the needs of transnational biographies.

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