

Endlich arbeiten dürfen- Karriereplanung mit Bleibeberechtigten in der Region Vorderland, Vorarlberg



the happy bakers Martin and Auzubellah
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Location

Vorderland, Vorarlberg (member municipalities: Fraxern, Klaus, Laterns, Meiningen, Rankweil, Röthis, Sulz, Übersaxen, Viktorsberg, Weiler, Zwischenwasser)

Country

Austria

Short summarizing description

We offer individual consultation for refugees, develop individual competences and goals, assess how these goals can be reached, compile CVs and applications, discuss educational possibilities and ways of financing them, search for job offers and apply for them, practice job interviews (intercultural learning), network with public authorities, entities, other organizations and employers, connect refugees with institutions or employers, provide information about education programs, etc. Employers who wish to hire refugees can also contact us and receive advice (e.g. regarding diversity management). We have an overview of who is looking for which kind of job in our region and can bring job-seeking refugees and companies together. The service is voluntary for refugees and complementary to existing services (e.g. employment agency).

Key Terms

labour market integration; intercultural learning; reduction public expenses

Context and background, Which problems/challenges does your measure try to solve/cope with?

Refugees are confronted with numerous different public authorities and entities, but do not yet understand the systems. They try to find jobs, but they are not familiar with the job seeking procedure in Austria (perfect CV needed, knowledge of special terms and networks required etc.). A vast number of young refugees are looking for a good education. They are confronted with a totally different school system and need someone to explain them, to reach their personal goal. Companies do not have sufficient information about the asylum regime and feel insecure. Both sides are insecure and sometimes need help to get in contact with each other. We try to solve the lack of information and knowledge about systems and ways of job searching in Austria by intensive, individual consultations, by

Which are the key objectives of your measure?

- Integration of refugees to the labour market (and society) in Austria - Reduction of financial expenses for municipalities and the federal state due to social welfare - Networking with refugees, companies and organisations that work with refugees - Minimizing xenophobia and prejudices on the side of employers by bringing them together with refugees and accompanying the first contact (if required) - A life in dignity for refugees – support on their way into an independent life

Who are the main target groups and beneficiaries of your measure?

Refugees who received asylum or any other title of residence in Austria and need help finding a job, an appropriate German class or any other type of education, or have a problem and do not know which public authority or entity could help them (small and middle scale) companies/entrepreneurs who are underinformed about the parameters of employing refugees and who are lacking a professional diversity management within their companies.

Which actions have already been implemented and which results have been achieved so far?

From April to December 82 refugees participated in this project. In technical terms these persons are “permanently unemployed persons” for several years. With our help 23 working contracts between regional companies and refugees were concluded within 9 months. 12 times we supported our clients to register for language-courses and informed them how to receive funding. We registered three people for a mentoring program of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. We registered 4 people for a graduation course and 1 for secondary school specialized for technical careers. With the help of volunteers or personal resources of refugees and with our bridging activities and the information flow another 10 additional working contracts have been signed. Employment rate among male refugees from 15-60 years (in our region) after 9 months of this project: ~ 70 % Employment rate among female refugees from 15-60 years (in our region) after 9 months of this project: ~ 10 %

Which were the main problems and challenges you were/are facing when implementing the project and how did/do you (try to) overcome them?

Refugees are confronted with different public authorities, but do not yet understand the systems. They try to find jobs, but are not familiar with the job seeking procedure in Austria. Many refugees are looking for an education. They are confronted with a totally different school system. Companies do not have sufficient information about the asylum regime and feel insecure. Both sides need help to get in contact with each other. We try to solve the lack of information and knowledge by intensive, individual consultations, using all kind of materials (brochures, websites, etc.).

Link to website

<http://www.vorderland.com/integration/arbeit/arbeiten-bleibeberechtigte>

Starting date

2017-04-01

Duration

9

Regional scale

2 - small region (some municipalities, a mountain valley etc.)

Contact person

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Category 1, Managing social change

Some companies are willing to employ refugees in order to benefit from an intercultural team, but are insecure whether or not they are allowed to do so. If they have somebody who explains the pertinent conditions to them, many of them are open to employ refugees. If refugees enter the labor market, it is an important step for their integration process. Besides work, they can also get to know people and get a possibility to talk German to native speakers. They earn an income to make a living. Consequently they gain respect, trust in the new society, intercultural learning and participation in different activities which are the basis for their empowerment. The entire society will benefit from strong men and women. The integration of women in the working life is still a big challenge, but by doing so – from raising the issue to employment – the whole society is confronted at all levels to make changes imaginable, acceptable and available.

Category 2: Integrating migrants into the local/,regional labour market

This is the main aim of the project. From April 2017 until the end of November 2017 due to the help offered by our project, 23 labor contracts were facilitated between companies and refugees from our region. 17 of them were supported by writing the CVs, sending the applications to companies, rehearsing job interviews, until they found a job. We helped 6 refugees writing a CV and showed them, where they can find job offers. Consequently they contacted companies on their own and found a job. We supported 3 higher educated refugees to register for a project of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (called "Mentoring") where refugees with higher qualifications are introduced to mentors that already play an important role in the labor market, in order to enable networking and facilitate finding a job. Once refugees are integrated in a company, they do not only earn money but also get to know the host society – from every day culture to traditions to religious or cultural issues.

Category 4: Supporting change in the local / ,regional dual education system

We are connected to all educational institutes. They inform us about projects and courses and we give the information to the refugees in our region and book them in (if fitting). Furthermore, in our consulting meetings we always inform the refugees about the educational system and the difference between skilled manual workers and unskilled laborer, as well as the possibilities of apprenticeship and educational offers from the job center. We helped 4 refugees to enroll for a course, where they have German, Mathematics, English classes as well as occupational orientation. They can take exams in all subjects and attain an official certificate, that they mature the matter of 9th grade within one year, with which they are able to enter higher schools or apprenticeship. It is a high priority to bring refugees into the dual educational path. However, their personal life situation often forces them to earn a full salary to provide remittances to their families.

Category 5, PR impact and awareness raising

Companies are important multipliers. All staff and customers of the company are confronted with the reality that refugees are part of the team. We had a panel discussion with politicians and companies and experts for the public of the whole region. Media coverage in local newspapers and websites were given and individual success stories are published regularly in local newspapers.

Category 6, Innovative dimension

Refugees get penalized by authorities due to the presumption that they are unwilling to integrate. Our project is based on the presumption that (most) refugees have a self-motivated career wish and voluntarily look for a job. We have neither a possibility nor an ambition to sanction them. This is the key to the project's success. It needs the personal contact, the trust and time to listen and understand the situation of refugees in their actual situation. We support refugees by empowering them to fulfill their wishes or plans. Corrections or reality checks are sometimes needed. Additionally, the atmosphere is not a sterile office but a friendly environment. Language barriers could be avoided as the project staff speaks German, Arabic, English, French, Italian and Portuguese if needed, and has the required appreciation for each culture for a trustful relationship with refugees. All questions are respectfully answered even if they are not part of the career planning.

Category 7, Transferability

The project could be easily transferred to other regions. Refugees need somebody who can support them finding a job, who explains where they can find job offers and who supports them writing their CV, finding individual ways of education to reach their goal. They do need individual counseling. The services provided need qualified staff with intercultural competences and it can be transferred to every region in Europe

Category 8, Embedment in a comprehensive welcoming strategy

The region Vorderland has a coordinator responsible for “integration management”. She supports the 11 participating municipalities in all questions of asylum and integration. Many activities in cooperation with volunteers, schools, neighbors, sports clubs etc. are organized and supported. The project is a product of this coordination office for integration which perceived the need of refugees for individual support, during their job seeking process already in 2016. The project is funded by the Ministry of Integration in the frame of the “National Action Plan for Integration”.

bilingual flyer for refugees

panel discussion on labour market integration of refugees