

Austria, Germany, Italy, Norway and Sweden



TALENTS project | New talents for companies – Developing the potentials of immigrants and refugees



Keyword(s):

Disadvantaged Groups of Learners; Migration and Integration; Career Guidance

Introduction

The ERASMUS+ project partners are main stakeholders of integration issues in their countries on different levels and in different fields. They are responsible for the political and strategic steering of education and integration on the regional and local level, they are experts in the field of validation and guidance, they offer language classes and vocational training and do research on integration issues.

Main challenge

Austria, Germany, Italy, Norway and Sweden had given home to a large number of refugees and asylum seekers during the last months (this was in 2016). A big share of them were staying at least for some years and many were trying to get a permanent residence permission. Moreover, there was already a high level of immigration the years before - not only by refugees but also from EU member states. The countries with high immigration figures, their regions and municipalities were (in 2016) at a crucial stage: They had to find ways to quickly integrate immigrants and refugees into society and the world of work in order to allow people to have structured and financially independent life and to ensure that societies could cope with the large number of new citizens.



Timing

The refugees crisis, immigration and integration was (in 2016, but still is) the biggest challenges for Europe and in particular for the TALENTS project partners; countries Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Norway and Sweden.

Objective

The TALENTS project focused on the inclusion of immigrants and refugees in language training and professional training in order to support their fast access to the world of work - as jobs was the most important basis for integration. In the framework of the TALENTS project, the project partners fundamentally adapted, improved and extended their integration activities and offers, above all guidance and training for immigrants and refugees and language training combined with vocational training. New offers were based on individual "talents" and interests of refugees. New trainings were tailormade to needs of immigrants and companies.

The aim was to increase not only the quality but also the effectiveness of offers concerning the fast integration into the labour market. In addition, continuous learning offers were developed that allow "upskilling on the job". The initial and continuous trainings were developed in cooperation with companies and with the help of a competence app that steered the development of training modules on the basis of company needs and immigrants' existing competences and interests.

Target group

Adult immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, that were not integrated in the school and initial vocational/university training system.

Geographical range

Austria, Germany, Italy, Norway and Sweden

Stakeholders and partners

- political/other decision makers who governed integration and its financing
- management staff in institutions involved in the integration of adults, e.g. municipalities and adult schools
- counsellors involved in the validation of competences of immigrants and in guidance
- teachers active in adult education (language training, professional training, basic skills etc.)
- social workers working with refugees and asylum seekers
- persons working in labour market partner institutions (Job Agencies, Chambers of Commerce and Crafts etc.)
- companies from different branches

Strategy / materials

Since the project was a continuation of the work of the EARLALL association, cooperation mechanisms and communication channels already existed. Within the EARLALL network, info-e-mails and a newsletter was regularly sent to members, regular working group meetings and general assemblies took place, a common website and the platform www.mutual-learning.eu gathering project results from various EU funded projects already existed. The head office of EARLALL was responsible for linking the EARLALL communication channels with the TALENTS project. The network also took responsibility for establishing contacts with other stakeholders on a European level and in other EARLALL member regions.

Resources

A TALENTS project website was developed (<https://talentseuproject.com/>)

The project website was linked to social media such as Facebook, Blogs and Youtube.

- online conferencing via technologies such as Vitero (integrated in the Digital Campus Baden-Württemberg) and Skype were used

Innovation(s)

The TALENTS project was innovative and/or complementary concerning quite a large number of aspects. Examples are:

1. The talents project transferred and further developed a new and very successful language and vocational training concept for immigrants developed by the City of Göteborg in cooperation with Cuben and companies. 90 % of the participating immigrants were employed after guidance and training during the first pilot phases.
2. In almost all TALENTS project regions language and vocational training concepts take a long period of time, offer general but no company tailored content and lack direct paths to “real” jobs in companies. The main innovation of TALENTS was: trainings are short but intensive and, in a first step, train competences needed by a specific company for open positions. They included language training related to practical language at a concrete work placement and some basic professional skills.
3. Moreover, the Göteborg HOTEL TALENTS project was based on individual “talents” and interests of immigrants. The aim of the project was to generate concepts and recommendations for integrated and individualised guidance services for immigrants in general and for different conditions in European countries.
4. At the other end, company needs were at the focus of the TALENTS project. The idea was to find the right persons for a specific job, to build on its talents and to develop its competences according to company needs.

5. As a triangle between company, immigrant and training institution an innovative app were developed in the TALENTS project that supported the exchange on placements and competences needed for a specific job. Like this training institutions could develop individual workplans for job candidates. The App was be linked to regional and European competence systems (EC-VET etc.)

6. The project produced innovative, job-related curricula and pedagogical material that available at an open online space allocated e.g. at the "Digital Campus" Baden-Württemberg. Since results of the project were crucial for integration policy in Europe the University of Florence analysed main results and findings of the project in a study on talents based integration of immigrants and refugees to the labour market. The study highlighted links to complementary initiatives in the regions.

Website/Social Media profile(s) of the initiative

www.mutual-learning.eu

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