

Eurodiaconia's Guide to Integration

*A collection of best practice examples in
the integration of migrants from the
Eurodiaconia membership*

Eurodiaconia is a **dynamic**, Europe wide **community** of organisations founded in the **Christian faith** and working in the tradition of Diaconia, who are committed to a Europe of **solidarity, equality** and **justice**. As the **leading network of Diaconia in Europe**, we connect organisations, institutions and churches providing **social and health services and education** on a Christian value base in over 30 European countries.

We bring members together to **share practices, impact social policy** and **reflect on Diaconia in Europe today**.

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<http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>. Eurodiaconia is a network of social and health care organisations founded in the Christian faith and promoting social justice.

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Introduction

Eurodiaconia is a network of 45 organisations in 32 countries, founded in the Christian faith and working in the tradition of diaconia. Representing over 30.000 local organisations, Eurodiaconia members provide social and healthcare services and promote social justice. They are engaged in all facets of migrants' integration, ranging from emergency aid to supporting access to the labour market and social participation.

In the summer of 2017, Eurodiaconia conducted this mapping of its members' successful integration projects for migrants across Europe. The resulting 'Guide to integration' complements the Eurodiaconia Policy Paper on the integration of Third Country Nationals by providing concrete examples covering different

aspects of the integration process. This guide aims at highlighting central elements for the effective integration of migrants by showcasing successful integration projects from the Eurodiaconia membership across Europe. It features 15 projects from 13 EU Member States, which include initiatives focusing on labour market access and social inclusion, as well as projects providing integrated support across different domains. Elements from the projects that are considered to be key for the successful integration of migrants in our societies will be highlighted and explained in the 'key findings' section. We hope that organisations can draw inspiration from these examples for new initiatives or for the further development of their work.

Key elements for successful integration projects

The projects run by Eurodiaconia members for the integration of migrants can be roughly categorized into four different types of projects: 1) projects which provide basic support, information about rights and services or access to mental health treatment; 2) projects concentrating on social inclusion and creating links between the migrants and the local community; 3) projects that aim primarily at achieving labour market integration; and 4) projects offering integrated support in all fields that are relevant for integration, ranging from finding accommodation, language learning, school support and finding a job.

Across the broad range of different services and projects which the Eurodiaconia membership provides for migrants, several aspects can be identified as being essential for the integration path, independently of the type of project or service that is being offered.

Firstly, knowledge of the host country's **language** is essential for migrants to be able to interact with their new environment and to find work that will allow them to be independent. Therefore, many projects offer language classes, or support the language learning process in some way through their activities. In the end, every activity can be a language class and each encounter with locals helps to use and practice the new language. Sometimes, however, specific language skills might be needed for a job and therefore some projects are able to offer special language classes teaching the technical language that is required for a specific job.

Secondly, providing **individualized support** is of key importance. In order to best accompany each migrant, the projects promote a tailor-made approach. This way, they are able to support and develop a suitable integration

path for each participant. In practical terms, this means understanding the needs of each user, be it in the field of housing, health, education or any other. It can also mean that migrants are supported in their legal and administrative dealings, or accompanied during their visits to healthcare facilities. Finally, it also means identifying skills, recognising qualifications and potential to find the best possible way to enter the labour market.

Thirdly, another crucial aspect for integration is promoting contact with the **local community**. Especially the projects centred around housing support and the social inclusion projects work a lot with the local community and aim at developing ties between locals and migrants. This is done through a broad variety of joint activities and the involvement of **volunteers**. These activities show how much integration is a two-way process and the importance of involving the host society. It does not only support the migrant to integrate, but also reduces fears or prejudices from the local population.

Fourthly, providing information about other existing services is key. Legal migrants have many rights and should receive support from

local authorities. However, they often lack information or necessary language skills to effectively access these services and receive the services they are entitled to. Therefore, many of the projects inform about the local social, health and employment services and sometimes also accompany the users to facilitate access to these essential services.

To support the integration process, many projects have developed broad **networks** consisting of **partnerships and cooperation** with local authorities, social services and other NGOs, which offer services and support in different fields. This cooperation make it possible to provide broad support to the migrant and also to prepare them for autonomy.

Similar partnerships with companies or NGOs can also be beneficial for migrants to gain **work experience** either through an internship, work-placement or volunteering. Some initial work experience in the host country has been highlighted by several members as being essential for a better understanding of the functioning and realities of the local labour market and as a useful stepping stone towards regular employment.

Projects from the Eurodiaconia Membership

Eurodiaconia members are running a broad range of projects for the integration of migrants, addressing different aspects and challenges of the integration process. Therefore, the project descriptions in this mapping are presented

in four clusters that regroup similar projects ranging from very basic support to housing projects, social integration projects and labour market integration.

I. Equipping people for connecting

Three of the presented projects provide basic support aimed at giving migrants the tools to connect with society. This can be basic material support and information about their rights and available services, such as in Denmark, or psychological treatment for migrants with mental health problems. A third project is about encouraging exchanges between children and youth from migrant and non-migrant backgrounds in order to enhance intercultural ties and prevent racism and discrimination. This can also be seen as a project that helps people to connect with each other.

Denmark

Kirkens Korshaer – Kompasset

<http://kompasset.kirkenskorshaer.dk>

Project aim – relieving distress, developing solutions: Kompasset is a day shelter for unregistered homeless migrants (EU citizens and Third Country Nationals (TCNs)) and aims at relieving the distress of those homeless migrants by providing basic commodities and a community offering attention, care and respect. It also seeks to prevent marginalization and social disruption by strengthening the individual's resilience and to find solutions to the user's individual situation. Since the opening of Kompasset in its new form in October 2016, the project has reached 900 homeless individuals, out of which 28 % are TCNs, mainly from Nigeria, Ghana, Albania, Morocco and Gambia. Their residence permits have often been issued in Italy and Spain.

Project description – information and basic support: Most users of the project are mobile EU citizens and TCNs with temporary or permanent residence permits in other EU

countries, who are not allowed to enter the labour market. In consequence, they survive by collecting refundable bottles on the streets of Copenhagen, sleeping rough and waiting for better times in their home countries. The day shelter includes a variety of services: day rest, showers, laundry, lockers, storage of IDs and valuables, food, some activities, and individual counselling regarding residence rights, access to the labour market etc.

For TCNs, the project's main focus is to provide accurate information about their rights and opportunities, in order for them to make realistic choices for their future. They receive support to cover basic needs through an emergency shelter during winter, access to a day shelter, showers, laundry and food. The project also provides general moral comfort and support, through motivational talks and social activities. Finally, they receive assistance in accessing emergency health care treatment.

Project funding and future: The project is funded mainly through Kirkens Korshærs' second hand shops, and also by FEAD and the Copenhagen municipality. For the future, Kompasset hopes to find a better and larger

location for its work, where more social and motivational activities for the users can take place. They are currently fundraising for this aim.

Sweden

Stiftelsen Vårsta Diakonigård

<http://www.varsta.se/english>

Project aim – treating mental health problems: The aim of the project is to support and provide treatment to refugees suffering from Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and trauma in order to facilitate their integration process.

Project description – a specialised clinic: Vårsta Diakoni is setting up a new psychiatric clinic in Härnösand (central Sweden, 450 km north of Stockholm) which will be specialized in treating refugees with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and trauma. This way, the project hopes to relieve other hospitals in the region who don't have the resources to treat refugees.

Currently, the medical staff is trained in new methods of diagnosis and treatment of trauma and PTSD. A physiotherapist will be part of the team. In late autumn, the first migrants will be treated and the aim is to have 75 persons in active treatment per year. The length of treatment will depend on the individual, but there will

be at least 10 to 12 sessions of approximately two hours. The treatment will be provided in the form of outpatient care; however, there will be the possibility of staying in a guest house close to the area for the duration of the treatment. Patients will also have the possibility of taking part in activities such as gardening, handcraft activities or working in a small coffee shop.

The clinic will also train staff and volunteers working with refugees to recognise and identify trauma and PTSD. The wider aim is to provide a deeper understanding of this complex problem and build up a support system for migrants in this field.

Project funding: The project is funded with support from the Swedish government, the regional hospital care as well as donations. **In terms of future developments,** the treatment might be expanded in the future to children and another clinic might be opened in the north of Sweden, where there are also many migrants that would need this kind of support.

Spain

Diaconia – Crisol Junior Programme

Project aim – preventing racism and discrimination: The aim of the Crisol Junior Programme was to bring together Spanish and foreign children and young people to improve their intercultural skills and prevent racism

and discrimination through creative activities. In addition, the project aimed at reaching a broader public through an awareness-raising campaign to shed a positive light on differences and intercultural coexistence.

Project description – awareness-raising through cultural activities for children and youth:

The project was a cooperation of various local Diaconias across Spain together with several Radio Broadcasting Channels and a TV Channel, with support of the Spanish Employment and Social Security Ministry. Several different activities have therefore taken place across the country to bring children and young people from different countries together. These activities included a children's writing and photography competition on interculturalism, a flashmob "Stop Racism", intercultural workshops for children and youth, concerts and cinema, sports events and many other events. The pictures from the photography competition were shown to the broader public through an exhibition. Among the activities, several actions were also aimed at the parents. In total, more than 700 children and young people took part in the project.

The awareness-raising and diffusion work was done through various media channels, especially Radio Encuentro and Radio Television Espanola. Several radio spots were broadcasted, as well as a specific feature on the Crisol Junior programme on TV. The project developed and published also the 'Crisol Junior Manifesto – Say yes to the differences', which is an easy to understand comic explaining to children the benefits of interculturalism. It has been diffused through various channels and during all Crisol Junior activities.

Project funding: The project was funded by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and the European Integration Fund. The project was run for the first time in 2014 and was continued in 2015.

II. Basic essential services to support integration

Migrants, especially asylum seekers and refugees, often need a broad range of support in order to be able to successfully integrate into the host society. Therefore, some projects adopted an integrated approach and support the migrant in all relevant fields, ranging from housing, school, education, healthcare to finding employment. This is in general only possible through close cooperation with public services and other organisations.

France

Fédération d'Entraide Protestante – La plateforme protestante pour l'accueil des réfugiés

<http://fep.asso.fr/vie-federative/vie-de-la-federation/la-plateforme-protestante-pour-laccueil-de-refugies/>

Project aim – Hosting, integrating, fostering community:

The Fédération d'Entraide Protestante (FEP) decided to create a new way to host asylum seekers and refugees in France to offer an alternative to the governmental housing system that doesn't have enough capacity. In addition to hosting and supporting the integration of the arriving persons, the project also intends to contribute to more openness towards foreigners by creating some collective civic

action, bringing together French and Syrian families, reducing fears and fostering community.

Project Description – an integrated approach:

Through its churches and communities all over France, the FEP has been able to host 450 asylum seekers and refugees in private homes since 2014. In 2016 the 'protestant platform for the hosting of refugees' was established to better coordinate this project

throughout France. The project has been broadened in 2017 to welcome asylum seekers arriving through humanitarian corridors from Lebanese refugee camps.

The project is based on the principle of hosting refugees and asylum seekers in citizens' homes. All hosting persons are part of an action group of volunteers set up either by individuals, NGOs or parishes. There are 65 of such action groups in France which are cooperating with professionals in the field of inclusion, housing, legal advice, health and other relevant fields. FEP member organisations support the action groups and the persons on their integration path through their social workers and expertise. The action group supports the host as well as the migrant in the integration process, by helping them to find language classes, to access health services, find a school for the children, give legal and administrative support and to find work. The normal hosting period is between 3 months and a year. The process is based on a constant exchange and voluntary departure once the integration process is well advanced. The composition of the action groups often includes mediators, doctors, psychologists or social workers, which is an important asset to resolve difficulties and support the further integration path of the hosted person.

Since 2017, FEP is also organizing humanitarian corridors from Lebanese refugee camps to France in partnership with Sant' Egidio and

the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy, which have been organising these humanitarian corridors in Italy before. An agreement was signed with the French government in April 2017 to take in 500 refugees through the humanitarian corridors and the first group of 15 asylum seekers has arrived on 15 July 2017. The identification of vulnerable asylum seekers is conducted by a team from Sant' Egidio and the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy on the ground. During the identification process, they also take into account the wish and capacity of integration in the hosting society and prepare the persons for the integration process, which helps to reduce problems and surprises upon arrival in France. They also closely cooperate with local parishes and UNHCR.

Financing - private donations: The platform is financed through private donations, an international sponsor and an American foundation. In total, the platform has a budget of around 100.000€ a year and employs one project coordinator who is responsible for the overall coordination of the project, as well as for organizing trainings for the action groups.

Future developments: The project is only guaranteed for two years and further developments will depend on financing. There is currently an effort underway to develop regional platforms, which might take over the project in the future.

Italy

Diaconia Valdese Service to Migrants in Milan and Servizio Migranti in Piedmont

<https://accoglienzamigranti.wordpress.com/>

Project aim – housing and inclusion: The Diaconia Valdese Service for Migrants in Milan and in Piedmont provide housing and support to asylum seeker to foster social inclusion and achieve economic and personal autonomy. In

addition, the project in Piedmont also aims to inform the general public about today's migratory phenomenon and to improve institutions' capacity to include persons with a migration background.

Project's description – housing, language, training: Both projects run several housing and integration projects for asylum seekers and refugees. In Milan, almost half of the beneficiaries are part of the Humanitarian Corridor Project, which is an ecumenical cooperation between the Sant'Egidio Community, the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy (FCEI) and the Diaconia Valdese. These organisations have signed a protocol with Italy's Foreign Ministry and Ministry of the Interior for the entry of 1000 refugees over two years. The other beneficiaries of the project are asylum seekers who arrived through the central Mediterranean route to Italy and have been assigned to the Diaconia Valdese by the local prefecture.

The Milanese project offers Italian language courses of 15 hours per week to all asylum seekers and refugees. Asylum seekers receive support during the administrative process to obtain refugee status. The project also provides professional and technical training, as well as general support to facilitate integration into the labour market (such as information about public and private services for job seekers, interview preparation, assistance in compiling a CV, professional coaching, etc). The final step in this preparation process may be the insertion of a person in a work experience scheme subsidized by a "borsa di lavoro" from the Diaconia Valdese. The project is closely cooperating with other service providers and NGOs to support their guests. Furthermore, they encourage gaining job experience through volunteering in different organizations in Milan which are dedicated to social projects. Lastly, all the children are enrolled in Italian schools.

Servizio Migranti in Piedmont has been operating in the migration field since 2011, cooperating with different institutions, associations and organizations. They promote different activities mostly focusing on asylum seekers and refugees, but also to other migrants. At the centre of their work are the reception projects

for asylum seekers and refugees, providing housing and using a holistic approach by offering a wide range of services in collaboration with specialized associations, institutions and NGOs to support the integration process. These services include legal support for the asylum procedure, healthcare and psychological support, language classes and professional training (including activities such as tailoring workshops, bike-repairing workshop and informatics workshop), job orientation, intercultural mediation within social services and public administration, as well as sports, cultural activities and several different events.

Currently, Diaconia Valdese hosts more than 200 asylum seekers in reception projects in Piedmont. Asylum seekers and refugees are housed in small flats, spread out in the territory, aiming to involve the local community in the inclusion process through people from the neighbourhood, cooperation with municipalities, schools and associations. This allows the project to establish links between people and to reduce racism and discrimination.

A challenging context: The projects are confronted with challenges due to the difficult socio-economic situation in Italy. Asylum seekers are facing important administrative and procedural burdens, with lengthy procedures that can exceed 12 months for the obtainment of refugee status or a residency permit. On the labour market, competition for jobs is very high and it is even more difficult for migrants. Finally, in Milan, it is particularly difficult to access housing, as rental costs in the greater area are extremely high.

Project's funding: The Humanitarian Corridors project is supported almost entirely by the Otto per Mille fund of the Waldensian Church. Other projects are funded by public authorities such as the municipality (SPRAR projects funded by the municipality of Milan) and the "Prefettura" in the Milan area.

The Servizio Migranti Piedmont is financed through a variety of resources including funds from the EU, as well as the Italian government, resources from the church and private donations. Furthermore, it relies a lot on volunteers that are engaged in different activities.

Future developments: The increasing need for reception projects means that these projects will be carried on in the future. In Piedmont, the project might be broadened to also include

women and minors. Moreover, their aim is to go beyond reception by extending their activities to support inclusion processes for refugees, adopting a long term approach. Servizio Migranti Piedmont also wants to get more involved in building the capacity of institutions and organizations working with migrants and in reinforcing public awareness about forced migration, human rights and the importance of intercultural dialogue.

Hungary

Reformed Church in Hungary - Kalunba Social Services Ltd

<http://kalunba.org/>

Project aim – services to facilitate integration: The Kalunba community center aims at better integrating refugees and migrants in Hungarian society through strengthened church commitment and integration support provided by professionals and volunteers. Through its activities, it hopes to achieve a greater openness towards refugees in church and society despite a political, legal and societal context that has become more hostile towards migrants. Overall, about 240 refugees and migrants are currently involved in various activities of the center. Two new projects, an after school programme and an advocacy programme, have started in April 2017 and will run for 4 years. The aim is to have about 40 students and 40 volunteers per year involved in the after school programme. The advocacy programme aims to reach out to every congregation of the church over the 4 years.

Project description: Kalunba runs a community center for refugees and TNCs in the heart of Budapest, providing a variety of services and a meeting place for the community. They use a holistic approach to create an opportunity for successful full integration. In the community centre, support is provided in different fields such as housing, language classes, addressing learning difficulties, tutoring, finding employ-

ment and creating a community. In addition, there is a new after school tutoring project for children, which was set up because the Hungarian school system is currently unable to respond to the needs of refugee children. The after school programme seeks to complement the regular school offer with additional teaching and mentoring for the children, as well as with food and school supplies.

Additionally, Kalunba has also set up an awareness-raising programme, which aims at providing an alternative narrative on migration in the parishes and the public discourse. For this project, they have set up partnerships with the churches, seminaries, theological universities, the mission department and the Youth Office. The aim is to allow to a broad range of persons to discover the work with refugees and reduce fears and prejudices. They have included refugee work in pastor trainings and organised conferences as well as community events.

Project funding: Kalunba is running a number of projects funded by the European Union. Currently, AMIF is funding a housing integration program, a Hungarian language program, a Resettlement Program, a university level interpreter training program and a research

and evaluation project on the national resettlement program. The project “Promotion of Life Perspectives and Integration of Refugees in Hungary” is funded by HEKS/EPER (Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen Schweiz/Swiss Church Aid) for the period of 2017-2020.

Future developments: The after-school and sensitization programmes have started in one congregation in the heart of Budapest. The aim is to spread both programmes to other congregations in the Budapest area and beyond.

III. Fostering social participation

Several projects concentrate on fostering social participation of migrants and creating opportunities to connect people and create a cultural exchange. On the one hand, this helps migrants to strengthen their language skills and to get to know their new country as well as their neighbours. On the other hand, it also aims at reducing fears within the local community and make the hosting society more open towards migrants.

Czech Republic

Diaconie ECCB – Project DOMA – Diaconie offers opportunities to migrants

<http://www.doma.diakonie.cz>

Project aim – Community building: The project DOMA aims at supporting the integration of recognized refugees into the Czech society and local communities. Through different activities, Czechs and refugees are invited to meet each other and establish personal relationships, thus reducing barriers and fears of the ‘other’. The project will be running for two and a half years from March 2017 until August 2019 in Prague and six Czech regions, and aims at providing personal support to at least 140 recognized refugees and training to 40 volunteers.

The context – political tension and hostility towards migrants: The project is taking place in a difficult political context, as there is a hostile attitude towards migrants (especially those with a Muslim background) in the Czech society, which is fuelled by politicians and the media who portray migration as security threat. For this reason, the project focuses on encounters and the establishment of personal relationships to help reduce this fear, change the

perception of migrants in the Czech society and allow for an integration process.

Project Description – Leisure activities for mutual understanding: Very concretely, the project is carried out in cooperation with congregations of ECCB in all six regions and Prague. The congregations provide the space for activities with migrants and members of the local communities, some of which are also engaged as volunteers in the project. However, the project is always open to everyone, including other NGOs and local authorities. In each region, the coordinators organise one or two activities each month, which take place in the premises of the congregations. These activities can be creative workshops, cooking, sport and cultural events or debates, depending on the interests of the participants, both migrants and Czechs.

Funding and Future Development: The project is financed in the regions by the ESF and in Prague through the HEKS (Hilfswerk

der Evangelischen Kirchen Schweiz) and KHK (Kirchen helfen Kirchen). So far, it is only targeting recognized refugees (asylum or

subsidiary protection), but it will be extended to all migrants, independently of their legal status.

Finland

Helsinki Deaconess Institute - Vamos for young asylum seekers - Turvapaikanhakijanuorten Vamos <https://www.vamosnuoret.fi/hankkeet/turvapaikanhakijanuorten-vamos>

Trail for involvement for Immigrant Youth - Osallisuuden polku maahanmuuttajanuorille

Project aim: These two projects aim to facilitate integration, prevent discrimination and deprivation and improve the quality of life of young asylum seekers or young people with a migrant background (16 to 29 years old).

Project description: The project '*Vamos for young asylum seekers*' develops a new rehabilitative service for activation of young asylum seekers. The service is targeted for 16 to 29-year-olds who are waiting for their residence permit decision in Helsinki, Vantaa and Espoo.

The activities are addressed to young asylum seekers, who have passed the age of compulsory education and are at risk of becoming idle. Therefore, participants take part in psycho-educative group activities, are encouraged to start new hobbies and have opportunities to make friends with people of Finnish background. The group activities have a psycho-educative focus and are carried out in reception centres for asylum seekers. The topics addressed range from issues of physical and mental health, familiarizing with Finnish society, livelihoods, social skills, and issues of living, working and studying in Finland. They also include learning the use of Finnish integration services. The group activities aim at bettering the life management, as well as self-knowledge and self-confidence of the participants.

Recreational activities are facilitated in cooperation with public services (sports and youth services), and other Vamos services which cater for young people with Finnish residence

permit. These cooperations create opportunities for encounters with Finnish peers and support the learning of the language. Making connections with Finnish young people helps with integration and brings mutual understanding which increases a sense of security. The project also provides opportunities of voluntary work for the beneficiaries, for instance with elderly people and other Vamos youth services.

The project '*Trail of Involvement for Immigrant Youth*' is established in three cities in Finland: Helsinki, Kuopio and Turku. The project is aimed at 16 to 29-year-olds (12 to 29-year-olds in Turku) with migrant backgrounds who are not in employment, education and training. This target group includes newly arrived immigrants, second generation immigrants and unaccompanied migrants. The project activities support the social involvement of these youth in Finnish society and guide them towards employment, education and other relevant activities through individual coaching and group activities.

The individual and group coaching consists of different issues such as familiarizing with Finnish society in terms of work and study life, housing, public services and availability of language courses. It also involves career coaching, themes of physical and mental health and hobbies. Career coaching involves CV writing, job searching and knowing your strengths and capabilities. The possibility of hobbies are mapped out, with emphasis on using relevant networks for low-threshold participation. Individual coaching also includes the

direction and accompaniment of young migrants to public services.

In addition the project is setting up a joint platform of the public sector and NGOs to reach young immigrants who are the most at risk of social exclusion and guides them to the services they need.

Netherlands

Project 'De TussenVoorziening'

Project aim: The goal of the project is to ease the transition from being a refugee in a shelter to becoming an active member in the Dutch society. In the Netherlands, refugees often have to wait in a governmentally run shelter where their lives are put on hold and where there is not much contact with the local society. Within this project, refugees can spend the waiting time to prepare for their new life by acquiring knowledge of the language, rules and customs in the Netherlands and understand the cultural differences. On the other hand, it also aims to fight stereotypes and increase the openness of the local community to welcome and help integrating refugees.

The project started in June 2016 in cooperation with six municipalities and has been able to support 150 refugees in its first year.

Project description: The program has been developed to help refugees with a residence permit to integrate and participate in the Dutch society while they are waiting for a house. The project takes place in a shelter that can house 96 people and offers a wide range of integrational activities. The program contains weekly recurring activities, like integration courses, languages lessons (including individual support lessons), sporting activities, bicycle lessons,

Project Funding: 'Vamos for young asylum seekers' is funded through the EU Home Affairs Funds and its Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) 2014–2020 programme and 'Trail of Involvement for Immigrant Youth' is financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) for the period 2016-2019.

healthcare workshops and activities that help with finding work or internships. The intention is to make the program as practice-oriented as possible, for example by asking the local police to come and give information during the lessons about the Dutch justice system. This way, the refugees receive important information but also learn about the role and approachability of the Dutch police and other emergency services.

Besides the weekly recurring activities there are regular activities to connect people, such as the Meet & Eat. This is a social activity in which people from the shelter and from the community come together to prepare food and eat together. Once every two weeks there is a game night on which people from the community come to the shelter to play board games with the guests. This way, people can connect and learn from each other whilst the refugees can practice the new language and create a social network. These activities are run with the support of more than 80 volunteers.

Project funding: The project is mainly financed through the partnering municipalities, but also through donations from local churches, which are mainly used to improve or expand the programme.

Church of Scotland – Edinburgh Weekend Club

Project aim – connecting migrants with the local community: The Edinburgh Weekend Club is a new initiative that aims at contributing to the integration of refugees, asylum seekers and new migrants (New Scots) in Edinburgh through responding to social isolation experienced specifically over the weekend. With most activities and programmes taking place during the week, the weekend can become a particularly isolating and lonely time. Simultaneously, New Scots do not always find their values reflected in Scottish forms of socialising and face therefore difficulties to connect with their local community.

The project's vision is to see New Scots become active members of society in Scotland, with strong social relationships. Through arranging monthly events on Saturdays and Sundays the Edinburgh Weekend Club enables its participants to build friendships, improve their English and learn more about Scottish culture and history. Additionally, these events should break down barriers of fear and prejudice as people of different cultures and religions connect, share with each other and learn from each other. All events are free and accessible, often hosted by local places of worship, and food is provided.

Project description – weekend activities: To enable an inclusive, welcoming and multicultural society the organisers believe that integration has to be two-way process that involves both the newly arrived individuals and the host communities. The Edinburgh Weekend Club project is delivered by a multi-faith partnership and is supported by a team of volunteers who

belong to different religious and belief traditions. With Edinburgh receiving significant numbers of refugees from Syria, many of whom are Muslim, this project seeks to increase intercultural understanding by both the host community as well as those who are newly arrived.

Monthly events started in January 2017 and have included among others visits to Edinburgh Castle, Edinburgh Zoo, Dalkeith Country Park, as well as a Family Party, an Iftar meal or a river walk and tea party. Events usually attract around 100 people, 70 are refugees or asylum seekers, and 30 are volunteers from the local community. They have also participated in a New Scots Steering Group which helps to offer advice for events and other faith-based and secular integration activities in the city; this involves refugees in shaping the future priorities for this work based on their own needs and aspirations.

Project funding and resources: The project employs a part time project development worker whose main responsibility is the delivery of Weekend Club events, including volunteer recruitment, training and support, managing relations with the various faith community groups or visitor attractions, liaising with refugees and migrants, and ensuring all legal requirements are met. Costs are met from the project budget of Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees. Additionally, some donations have been received from individuals and local groups and the project has received £4,500 grant from Police Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Government as part of work to eradicate Islamophobia.

IV. Labour market inclusion

The integration of migrants in the labour market is an important aspect to allow for independence and autonomy of the migrant. However, migrants face many barriers, such as insufficient knowledge of the language, lack of understanding of the local labour market and recruiting procedures and/or a lack of formally recognised skills. Several Eurodiaconia members have therefore developed projects that aim at supporting migrants especially in accessing the labour market.

Austria

Evangelisches Diakoniewerk Gallneukirchen – Training course for asylum seekers

Project aim: The Evangelisches Diakoniewerk Gallneukirchen is a modern social enterprise with offers for people with disabilities, for older persons and in the field of health and education. Their offer includes several schools for social assistance, teaching the necessary skills for the support and care for people with special needs. In 2016 they decided to use those existing structures to offer a training course for professional orientation for asylum seekers. The aim of the course is to allow asylum seekers to discover whether it would suit them to work in the social economy (elderly care, work with handicapped persons or in the health sector). Furthermore, the course aims to provide them with good knowledge of the German language.

Project description: The free training course lasts one year and includes 290 hours of lessons, 150 hours of German classes and 200 hours of practical experience. They feature an introduction to pedagogy, psychology and nursing studies and education around basic health care principles. The participants improve their knowledge of the German language and can find out if they want to continue with vocational education in the social sector through

practical experience in the social services of the Diakoniewerk.

Those wishing to continue with a vocational training can do this in one of the schools of the Diakoniewerk once they have received refugee status or subsidiary protection. Enrollment however is not automatic, but they need to follow the regular recruitment procedure. The aim is to only enroll those participants who have real chances to successfully complete the training.

Independently of whether the participants continue with a vocational training or not, they benefit from the language courses, the work experience and discovery of the social and health sector in Austria, as well as from the social links they have created. Some also discover that they would prefer doing a vocational training in another work area.

The programme is open to all asylum seekers. In 2016, 8 asylum seekers took part and a similar number is expected for 2017.

Project funding: The project is financed by the Diakoniewerk and the Region of Upper Austria.

Project aim – integrating migrants in the

social economy: The Welcome Center Sozialwirtschaft Baden-Württemberg is an information center for migrants working in the social economy sector as well as for enterprises working in that same field, interested in recruiting migrants. The Welcome Center informs skilled personnel about their possibilities and the prerequisites for finding a qualified job in Baden-Württemberg in the social economy, and also provides support regarding living and working as well as residency requirements in Germany. Enterprises also receive support and information on hiring migrant workers.

Project Description – information and training:

The regular activity of the Welcome Center consists in providing consultancy services for international professionals and enterprises in the social economy sector, as well as courses for nurses to enable them to get their professional recognition and management trainings for enterprises who employ international personnel. The Centre informs Third Country Nationals (TCNs) about necessary administrative steps, directs them towards language classes and vocational training opportunities, raises awareness about work routines in Germany and informs about involved costs and funding opportunities. Companies also receive support and advice in administrative and legal questions, as well as support for integration activities. Whenever necessary, the Welcome Centre redirects beneficiaries to other existing services.

In addition to this regular activity, the Welcome Center has, in cooperation and upon request from enterprises, together with the relevant stakeholders, set up special trainings for asylum seekers and refugees to receive qualifications in geriatric care and housekeeping since 2015. The projects are structured into three phases. In the first phase (3 months) volunteers help identify motivated candidates, who are then informed about the work and follow language classes (level A1/A2) while going through the selection process. In phase two of the project (6 months), they follow language classes at level A2/B1, do some work-shadowing and an internship. After successful participation in these two phases, the refugees can enrol in a special vocational training programme for migrants which lasts 2 years and includes language classes bringing them to level B2. Following this, they can transition into a shortened mainstream vocational training. In 2015, 15 refugees have started the programme and, so far, no one has dropped out.

Project Financing: The project is funded to 60% by the Ministry for Economy, Housing and Labour of Baden-Württemberg. The “Diakonische Werke Baden und Württemberg” also finance part of the work and a small income is generated by conducting workshops on intercultural skills and through cooperation projects for skilled professionals. In the near future, the Welcome Center plans to focus more on migrants who already live in Germany as well as those who want to take up a vocational training course in Baden-Württemberg.

Switzerland

Salvation Army Switzerland- Integration Program “handsON”

Project aim: The goal of the program is to integrate asylum seekers and refugees into the Swiss labour market.

Project description: “HandsOn” is a project built around a sewing factory and follows a holistic approach to support asylum seekers and refugees in their integration process. The project works in close cooperation with other departments of the Salvation Army Refugee Aid as well as external partners and the health and welfare directorate of the Canton of Bern. Thanks to such cooperation, the Salvation Army can fulfil the mission of integration and offer an efficient and sustainable programme. The program is still in the development phase and currently only exists for the canton of Bern.

In Liebefeld, Region of Bern, handsON has a so-called “factory”, which is used as a training centre for practical experiences, schooling and meetings of the asylum seekers and refugees with the job coaches. The HandsOn production facility gathers participants’ work experience, improves their knowledge of German and of the Swiss labour market and increase their chances for independence. Participants benefit from qualification measures, intensive language courses, practical training modules and a personal job coach. Work experiences of the participants in non-profit employment programs are valued and used as a basis for

their individual integration planning. Additionally, the program works together with employers for training places. During this placements, the HandsOn Job Coaches are available to help the apprentices as well as the employers.

The project has started in 2017 and currently accompanies 30 asylum seekers that went through a selection process and are now benefiting from a tailor-made educational program. The first experiences and feedback of the programme have been very positive, encountering interest and support from governmental partners, civil society as well as from employers and also high numbers of interested migrants, proving the importance and need for such a programme.

Project Funding: The project is funded through own funds (Salvation Army Switzerland), as well funds from the canton of Bern.

Future of the Project: The aim of the project is to increase the number of participants up to 1000 people and to produce own manufactured products that will be sold through partners. As soon as the pilot phase has been completed further production facilities are supposed to be opened. Furthermore, they want to work more closely with the private sector to create training places for migrants.


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