

Final Conference and Outcome 4

Recommendations

- European Partnership and Intervention Model of Project “Fast Track Action Boost” (FAB) -

Introduction

The ‘Recommendations’ have been presented in an oral form on the FAB Final Conference ‘*Europe as an Inclusive Workplace – Memos from Fast Track Action Boost*’, held on 14th April 2021 (virtual).

Simultaneously our ‘Recommendations’ are a product and deliverable of the Outcome 4 (see Detailed Project Description of FAB). They are, in particular, a comprehensive result of our Paper ‘*FAB project Outcome 4 – Analysis of the Context researches in terms of partnership and intervention models – up-date 2020/ 2021*’, of different local empowerment (LEW) and policy practice workshops (PPWG). The evaluation results and the experiences of the ‘Pilot Actions’ in five territories have also been taken in account.

Remember the main question of our FAB project:

How can we integrate refugees, in particular women, into the labour market as quickly as possible?

- Which partnerships and co-operations do we need for this?
- Which interventions work? Which don't?
- What can we learn from the FAB – project for our participating cities, but also for other European cities and the European level in general?

I. Recommendations concerning the Partnerships

1. **Ensure a clear distribution of responsibilities, competences and tasks between the different levels of government** (national, regional, local or municipality level) and ensure a fluid and direct communication between these levels.
 - Some of our cities, recommend a more decentralised system and call for more autonomy on the regional or city level, others emphasize the aspect, that federal or national regulations are important to guarantee standards all over the country and lead to more effectivity and efficiency.
2. **Organise a dynamic and coordinated model between the different partners on a horizontal level**, combine efforts and resources.
3. **Create a cohesive chain of information and activities** for the newcomers by successful cooperation of the involved authorities on the city level.
4. **Make the Reception of newcomers more equal and spread out through the country.**
5. **Strengthen in particular the cooperation between the Public Employment Service and the relevant city departments**, through coordinated, complementary active labour market programmes (for those who are already recognised, but also for those, who are rejected or only tolerated in the recognition process).
6. **Involve from the beginning the businesses - a key factor for success** and for fast labour market integration.
 - Unlock the companies! Not only refugees, but also the companies need support!
 - Our experience is: in the last five years many companies have positioned themselves, being either open or closed to the refugees.
 - But companies that have hired refugees are usually very satisfied with their decision. They benefit from the often high motivation of refugees.
 - Refugees contribute to diverse teams that are often more efficient
 - And once a refugee gets into work or training, he or she learns very quickly!
7. **Cooperate with the different municipal stakeholders**, like chambers, social partners, the third sector and welfare organisations, NGO`s and - last but not least - the **civil society**, all the initiatives on the ground, including volunteers, and refugees` communities play a crucial role.
8. **Develop local action plans** (in particular, for those refugees who cannot be reached from the mainstream structures and institutions)

II. Recommendations concerning the Interventions

1. **Establish a ‘Welcome centre’ as a one stop-shop with initial services for all newcomers, including refugees, following the principle ‘accompaniment or integration from DAY 1’**
 - offer first aid services like registration, recognition pathways, accommodation, information about legal rights and duties, about culture of the host country, first steps to orientation and language courses, education and work
 - function as “service-hub” with a network of all institutions, organisations and initiatives involved in refugee policies
 - provide services in several languages (among them languages of the origin countries where the most refugees come from).
 - implement a permanent (or repetitive) information campaign
2. **Make a competence check (not only) at the beginning using a professional profiling tool**
 - By the way we checked the “European Skills Profiling Tool”, but applied also other profiling tools (no place to elaborate here, see final report, FAB project)
 - Recording knowledge and training is not only important at the beginning but should be incorporated also in training and further education.
 - Good practice example: Vienna Education Passport - recording and documenting completed courses and certifications
3. **Support self-assurance and system learning**
 - that means, to foster the capacity of refugees to navigate in the legal, social, cultural and working context of the receiving or host country
4. **Implement information and counselling services with good equipped and qualified counsellors or coaches**
 - following an empowerment approach
 - individual and group coaching
 - ideally with stable, long-lasting relationships, build on trust
 - integrating digital services and devices
 - low threshold!
5. **Organise outreach actions - go where the refugees are**
6. **Combine language and vocational training courses for faster integration.**
 - The fast tracks aim to offer internship, language training and education in a coherent process and the goal is to shorten the time from arrival to work (making sure that the

newcomers are matched to the right jobs and ensure the provision of skills to the industries in which there is labour shortage).

7. Offer Team - Teaching and part-time courses

8. Provide work - places and work experience, internships by companies, municipalities and NGO`s

- Sensitize refugees also for non-academic professions, for trained jobs, so that they do not get stuck in unskilled or/ and badly paid jobs
- Contacting and networking with companies is crucial!
- create job offers and work experience also by the municipalities themselves, by cooperatives, Charities or NGO`s

9. Launch programmes that support the entrepreneurial spirit and self-employment of refugees

III. Special recommendations concerning female refugees

Note: This target group is in the core of the FAB project. From 294 participants in our FAB Pilot projects in the five cities 231 (78,5%) were female. However, the reality is different: when it comes to real jobs in companies, in the labour market, the proportion of women among refugees is much lower than among men. This has been exacerbated by the Corona pandemic. But at the same time the vast majority of women would like to work! That shows, there is a great need for action in this field!

- 1. Be aware of the personal and professional experiences of women gained in their home countries (including the flight experiences)** that are different from those of men
- 2. Offer special settings of counselling,**
- 3. Provide extra language classes and vocational training towards special professions** (including those which are traditionally occupied by their male counterparts).
 - Especially at the beginning of the integration process, it is important to accompany women separately and to provide role models.
- 4. Provide child - care support.**
- 5. Make also use of blended learning** - this has a (positive) impact on the participation of women.
- 6. Digital guidance is particularly important.**
- 7. Include information and learning about equality and the expectations of the host- ing society**
 - the task is here to break up traditional role models, raising self-esteem and achieving acceptance of the system of the host country, but at the same time we should also have respect to the culture of the home country and the individual background of refugees.

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