

Intercultural competences for trainers

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 GERMANY

Timeline

2016 Implementation	2017 Implementation	2018 Implementation
2019 Implementation	2020 Implementation	2021 Implementation
2022 Implementation	2023 Implementation	2024 Implementation

ID number 28148

Background

In the age of megatrends such as globalisation, demographic change, internationalisation and increasing mobility, a growing diversity is emerging that also affects working life and thus vocational training in Germany. Culture is becoming an increasingly important factor here, because many people have to deal with people from other cultures in their everyday working lives. The exchange with other cultures holds potential for conflict, but above all also great opportunities and potential for companies.

The so-called migration package contains many legislative changes that came into force on 1 January 2020. The acceptance of training is often linked to hopes for easier access of refugees to qualification and employment.

Objectives

To improve the intercultural competences of trainers and thereby to enable them to work with refugees and newly arrived migrants.

Description

Following the enormous influx of refugees in 2015-16, BIBB expanded its support offer to trainers on developing intercultural competences and training refugees. Since 2016, diverse activities promoting the intercultural competences of in-company trainers were provided on the web portals Foraus.de (BIBB), Ueberaus.de (BIBB) and stark-fuer-ausbildung.de (Strong for apprenticeships, by the DIHK chambers association).

The project Qualiboxx was replaced in 2016 by the online platform Überaus (BIBB), aiming to support the transition from school to apprenticeship and work. It reinforces intercultural competence for training in companies through the provision of information and materials for trainers (e.g. videos), who are working with refugees and newly arrived migrants.

A portal managed by the education service providers of the chambers of commerce and industry (DIHK) and of the chambers of skilled crafts (ZWH), was expanded to assist trainers

in their work with refugees and newly arrived migrants. It provides best practice examples, a comprehensive knowledge base, continuing professional development modules and networking with partners such as the network Companies integrate refugees (*Unternehmen integrieren Flüchtlinge*). This network offers constant further training opportunities, publications, seminars/webinars, language flyers, visualisation aids, etc. for companies that deal with cultural differences. The network is an initiative of the DIHK, funded by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Climate Protection. Under the topic of *Integration in the company and diversity management*, it offers recommendations for action, webinars and experience reports on the question of how intercultural skills can be imparted to employees. To find specific support measures, you can search the database by region and topic

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2019, the following activities took place:

- (a) the BIBB published the handbook for trainers, *Diversity in vocational education and training - Successful in-company training of refugees*;
- (b) five interactive video clips, four films and various materials support good communication between apprentices with refugee status and the trainer in companies;
- (c) the portal, stark-fuer-ausbildung.de, updated its comprehensive *Trainer manual - knowledge modules for trainers who integrate refugees into apprenticeship*;
- (d) the University of Bonn offered a new continuing professional development for trainers, *Integration perspective - Language at work (Perspektive Integration - Sprache im Beruf, PIB)* from September 2019, funded by the North Rhine-Westphalia Ministry of Culture and Science (MKW); this practice-oriented programme is funded by the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia until September 2022. The programme provides vocational school teachers, company trainers and experts from institutions and organisations in the field of vocational education and training (VET) with further qualifications in the area of language support at the workplace and the language-sensitive design of training;
- (e) in April 2019, the network *Companies integrate refugees* welcomed its 2000th member.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, the following activities took place:

- (a) the so-called migration package contains many legislative changes that came into force on 1 January 2020;
- (b) the web portal for in-company trainers, Foraus (BIBB), published a guide on the new roles and tasks of trainers, also promoting intercultural competences;
- (c) the chambers' portal for trainers, *Stark für Ausbildung - das Ausbilderportal*, continued to address intercultural aspects for in-company trainers, focusing on refugees during three webinars in May, June and July 2020. In addition, an online continuing professional development (CPD) for trainers, *Integrating refugees in and through apprenticeship*, was provided in April/May 2020 and scheduled again for March/April 2021;
- (d) the chambers association (DIHK) has also been broadcasting a podcast *Be a Mentor (Sei ein Mentor)* for in-company trainers since July 2020. In October 2020, the focus of the podcast was on communication with refugee apprentices during the corona crisis;
- (e) the University of Bonn continues to provide the PIB CPD for trainers already mentioned in 2019;
- (f) BIBB published in June 2020 a practical guide on vocational orientation and

preparation for refugees and migrants.

2021 Implementation

Within the framework of a BMBF-funded project, the 'Überaus' expert unit has developed a qualification concept for on-site training for trainers. The aim is to prepare trainers for the demands that can arise in communicating with apprentices from different backgrounds and in different life situations. In four face-to-face modules, specific topics are dealt with that are relevant in practice and are largely independent of the sector, occupation and size of the company.

The BIBB and chambers portals continued to support in-company trainers in acquiring intercultural competences. Further, the University of Bonn continued to provide the PIB CPD 'Integration perspective - Language at work' for trainers.

In February 2021, the chambers network 'Companies integrate refugees' welcomed its 2 642th member.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the BIBB and chambers portals continued to support in-company trainers in acquiring intercultural competences. Further, the funding for the PIB *Integration perspective - Language at work* CPD for trainers has been extended until the end of 2023, so that there are still no fees for participants.

Since the beginning of the Ukraine crisis, millions of people have fled, thousands of them have come to Germany. In 2022, the chambers network *Companies integrate refugees* published therefore an update of their handbook for volunteers supporting refugees, with a specific checklist for volunteers supporting refugees from Ukraine. In February 2023, the network welcomed its 3 446th member.

2023 Implementation

The BIBB Board has decided to update the framework plan for the Trainer Aptitude Ordinance (AEVO), in which, among other things, the intercultural competences of trainers are named as a learning objective. On the one hand, the skills of the trainers relate to a constructive, respectful and objective approach to intercultural differences when supervising apprentices with different cultural backgrounds. Equally important is the ability to impart intercultural competences to the apprentices.

The BIBB's training portal for trainers, *Foraus*, was transferred to the *Leando* portal in November 2023. Trainers can find tips on dealing with cultural differences on the website.

The dossier *Qualification and labour market integration - refugees* on the specialist portal *Überaus* was expanded to include information on the integration of refugees from Ukraine. The dossier for trainers *Language and culture in training*, updated in 2023, is also available on the specialist portal and contains a wealth of information on cultural differences.

University of Bonn continues to provide the PIB CPD for trainers already mentioned in 2019.

2024 Implementation

Generally speaking, it can be said that intercultural competences in VET have been taken up by the topics of dealing with diversity, diversity and heterogeneity and democracy education against the backdrop of social and political developments. Its relevance continues to be recognised politically due to the integration of refugees and the need for foreign skilled workers.

In the evaluation of the *Vocational Orientation for Immigrants (BOF)* funding

programme (2022) (see also PD Integrating migrants and refugees in VET and work), reference was made to implementation difficulties on the part of companies in the integration of refugee/immigrant apprentices. The need for further support measures for company staff in dealing with people from a different cultural background in the course of an apprenticeship was cited as potential for improvement.

Since 2024, the *BOFplus* funding measure has followed on from the expired *BOF* programme. The objective explicitly refers to supporting companies during the apprenticeship of refugees/immigrants.

The chambers network *Companies integrate refugees* had 4289 members in October 2024.

The chambers' portal for trainers, *Stark für Ausbildung - das Ausbilderportal* (Strong for training - the trainer portal), continued to address intercultural aspects for in-company trainers, focusing on refugees, but also on skilled workers from abroad. Module five of the training focuses on the integration of foreign apprentices. The first workshop for trainers focuses on raising awareness of cultural differences, encouraging participants to reflect on their own role in an intercultural context and examining the life situation of refugees.

As part of the *Q40 network* (see also PD Digital education and upskilling of VET teachers), a further education module entitled *Learning diversity and interculturality in nursing training* is being offered, in which the digital support of apprentices with a history of flight and/or migration, behavioural problems and learning difficulties is taught.

The published issue of the journal BWP focussing on *Migration and Integration* is referred to on *Leando* in order to take a closer look at the role of vocational education and training in the integration of people with a migration background. The issue presents research findings and practical approaches.

University of Bonn continues to provide the PIB CPD for trainers already mentioned in 2019.

Bodies responsible

- Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)
- Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK)
- Central Office for Further Education in Skilled Crafts (ZWH e.V.)
- North Rhine-Westphalia Ministry of Culture and Science (MKW)
- Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)

Target group

Education professionals

Teachers
Trainers

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

Osnabrück Declaration

European Education and Training Area and international VET

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[New framework plan for the Trainer Aptitude Ordinance \(AEVO\)](#)

[Leando.de - BIBB portal for trainers - Intercultural competences](#)

[Leando.de - Train refugees](#)

[Web portal Überaus - Language and culture in apprenticeship](#)

[Network Companies integrate refugees](#)

[Web portal Überaus for transitions to training and work - Refugees](#)

[Trainer manual - knowledge modules for trainers who integrate refugees into apprenticeship](#)

[University Bonn - CPD for trainers, Integration perspective - Language at work \(Perspektive Integration - Sprache im Beruf, PIB\)](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Skilled Immigration Act

The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs BMAS has drafted the Skills Immigration

Act in December 2018, in the context of its Strategy to secure skilled labour. The Act features the following:

 GERMANY

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Integrating migrants and refugees in VET and work

Since 2015, in line with the federal ESF integration guideline, the IvAF integration programme (Integration of asylum seekers and refugees) has contributed to the sustainable integration of asylum seekers, asylum applicants and refugees in training and employment through comprehensive counselling

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2021 Completed

Pact for vocational training

The Pact for VET (*Der Berufsbildungspakt*) includes the following measures, partly addressing work-based learning:

 GERMANY

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28148>