



Case Study Briefing

**MAMBA – labour market integration for
refugees and asylum seekers in the city of
Münster**

(Münster, Germany)



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1. Overview

Labour market integration for refugees and asylum seekers in the city of Münster (NRW) – the case study of the MAMBA-Programme.

In the frame of the case study we evaluated the innovativeness, implementation and impact of social investment in the field of labour market integration of refugees and asylum seekers. The investigation describes ways of implementing social investment and helps to find a strategy to adapt effective and efficient social policy instruments for different policy fields and countries.

With the term 'social investment' we refer to social policy instruments which aim at enabling people to cope with future risks through e.g. education, training, social services or universal access to child care. In this view, social policy becomes a preventative long-term strategy with social and economic returns over time instead of merely compensating for income losses.

2. Key policy implications

Investment in intersectoral exchange and personalised services are impactful to integrate refugees and asylum seekers into the labour market

- Intensive personal support lowers barriers to institutions and helps to offer targeted services for individual problems. Therefore, counsellors must be aware of the target group's needs through trainings and information.
- Comprehensive case management provides hand in hand assistance to avoid drop outs at transition points. The basis is mutual trust and unbureaucratic interaction of all relevant actors involved in the integration process as well as good connections to third organisations.
- Desirable spill-over effects: building a network structure reduces institutional prejudices and makes public and social institutions more aware of refugees and asylum seekers needs.
- Bringing companies and migrants together: clarification of legal and practical hindrances obstacles and opportunities through counselling, information and exchange. Therefore, the reputation of a stable and trustful network is favourable.
- The integration of migrants into society and labour market is a long-term project and so must be the perspective of funds. Financiers may state conditions of effectiveness and efficiency, but should let the local actors adapt to their specific circumstances

3. Context

In Germany, a situation of migrants being isolated from society and labour market evolved in the past years. The reasons for this situation were legal and formal barriers institutionalised at federal level. Many asylum seekers did not receive a residence permit and in the same time could not be deported to their home country for legal or practical reasons, which led to a status of tolerance (Duldung). Duldung at this time guaranteed a minimum standard of living, but limited to work or to leave the region. Some barriers have been eased since 2007 due to guidelines issued by the European Union and complemented by the Bleiberechtsinitiative XENOS (funded by ESF and the Federal Ministry for Work and Social Affairs). The XENOS programme assisted the labour market access (even though subordinated) with additional services. When in 2015 one million migrants came to Germany, the XENOS programme expanded its scope to asylum seekers and refugees under the name “Integrationsrichtlinie Bund” and modified conditions.

Since the programme integrates people of different migration waves and several countries, their background and situation is very different. Additionally, the German asylum and residence law acknowledges different legal rights and duties depending on the status, country of origin and duration of stay. Therefore, the existing German institutions with their static set of measures happen to be not effective. Local networks like the MAMBA project in Münster try to fill this gap in the frame of the Integrationsrichtlinie Bund by joining the relevant actors and offering social, employment, psychological and legal services from one hand. The MAMBA network comprises five partners: The non-profit society for the support of asylum seekers (GGUA), the society for vocational development and training (GEBA), the Chamber of Crafts training centre (HBZ), the Youth training centre (JAZ) and the municipal employment office (Jobcenter). The programme is an innovative example for an intersectoral active labour market policy. Furthermore, the case is also part of municipal immigration policy. The network can be perceived as social investment, since public finance, private donations and voluntary work are invested in preventing societal exclusion and in labour market integration.

The InnoSI project tries to answer the following questions:

Have the network structures and services been implemented as intended? If not so, why?

Did the project produce an economic and social impact? If so, how?

What can we learn and adapt for other policy fields and regions?

4. Sources of evidence

To evaluate the implementation and impact of social investment in the case of the MAMBA programme, we took different sources into account.

For a **first** overview, we studied the state of the art in research literature as well as already existing evaluations. Furthermore, policy documents and legal frameworks have been analysed to gain insights in public objectives and measures in labour market policy.

As a **second** step, we tried to describe the group of persons in need as well as the aims of the MAMBA project by using official statistics and conducting interviews.

After identifying the needs and intentions of all groups, we described the measures, steps and instruments to achieve these goals and needs in a **third** step.

Fourth, we compared the objectives of the programme with the real implementation of social investment to identify successful, less successful or delayed measures.

In a **fifth** and **sixth** step, we evaluated the social and economic impact of social Investment by assessing a change of situation for the persons in need and the monetary return for society and state. As a basis for the evaluation, we conducted interviews and analysed official statistics.

5. Main findings

The Integrationsrichtlinie Bund has been conceived at federal level by experts and politicians to integrate refugees and asylum seekers with cumulative placement obstacles into society and labour market. Therefore, networks with specific partners (e.g. refugee and migrant organisations are not obligatory, but the jobcenter) were intended. These should focus on the individual deficits of migrants compared to the German labour market structure and on a fast job placement for those with the legal right to do so. Tailored, participant-focused measures should lead to enhanced employability of the participants. The regulation of measures and structures to be funded is comparatively strict with limited freedom to manoeuvre for the local actors. Additionally, the funding is short term oriented, since the programme is still seen as experimental even though it is evaluated positively for several times.

However, it is evident from the interviews that MAMBA actors with their long term experience, local responsibilities and their individual goals are working as creative as possible with the given regulations and funding restrictive. Thus, they enlarged the focus on individual hindrances to a structural level of barriers, which is basically the residence status connected with work restrictions. For example, the HBZ, with valuable connections to companies and good reputation in negotiations with public authorities, can in some cases achieve a residence permit by vocational training placement.

The advantage of a multidisciplinary network can also be its challenge. As the interviews and internal documents disclose, different approaches and ideas of the actors led to disparities in the beginning. For instance, when the GGUA tries to improve the living conditions of refugees and asylum seekers and the HBZ intends to ensure a pool of skilled workers in the handicrafts branch, both focusses and targets can concur for one person. However, the network soon got aware of this problem and solved it through a process of understanding and accepting each other. Furthermore, regularly meetings and personal communication guarantee the stability of the network.

The funding insecurity is more severe and leads to a lack of planning, reduces the attractiveness of the MAMBA programme as employer, risks a high staff turnover and prevents the sustainability of services for refugees and asylum seekers. Thereby, important expertise and partnerships could get lost and must expensively be build up again when the situation gets more forcing. Furthermore, the instrument of monitoring is not reliable, since a positive impact must in the long run lead to a stable funding and is in reality dependent on the political agenda.

6. Impact & Implications

The network structure of MAMBA guarantees a targeted and seamless support of refugees and asylum seekers. Low threshold access offers like women cafés lower barriers for the first contact with the target group. At the same time the first contact organisations GGUA and JAZ are experts in stabilizing (young) migrants financially, socially and mentally. With personal counselling, guidance and particularly time, a trustful relationship is built up.

Comprehensive case management provides hand in hand assistance to avoid drop outs at transition points. The individual prospects are developed jointly for each participant. This calls for close interactions and low unbureaucratic hindrances between the usually separated institutions. The MAMBA network was able to establish mutual respect between the members through regularly meetings, short communication channels and an open door approach. In addition, the MAMBA coordinator stays informed with the legal and practical regulation of migrant's labour market access and regularly offers trainings and seminars for the network partners.

The MAMBA network embraces even more actors: different voluntary organisations, companies, representative bodies or public authorities are regular collaborating partners in integrating clients into labour market and society. Through the committed work of each network partner and the efficient network structure, MAMBA has a good reputation in the local community, earning high trust and open doors. Thus, public and social institutions get more aware of refugees and asylum seekers needs and adopt practices from the network.

Already, many companies would like to hire refugees or asylum seekers, but they hesitate due to legal and practical barriers and the future uncertainty. The MAMBA counsellors reduce these obstacles by clarifying the situation and matching the needs of client and potential employer. Since the first setup started in 2008, more than 1.400 persons participated in the MAMBA programme. In the second round, MAMBA 2 reached about 1.000 participants, of which 340 (34%) could be placed successfully into employment, vocational training or long-term qualification measures. For the ongoing third funding round, MAMBA envisages to support 800 participants until the end of 2019 and to generate a placement rate of 40%. According to the statements of the involved organizations, MAMBA 3 is on the right track meet this ambitious targets.

For the second round of the MAMBA programme we tried to show the economic impact through calculations of the programme cost compared to savings due to sooner or more permanent labour market access. We can state an economic return of the social investment in the MAMBA project from the second year of labour market participation or vocational training of the participants. For every following year about 12.000 Euro of public payments can be saved per successfully integrated participant. Thus, the MAMBA project can be perceived as a very impactful social investment.

7. Further information

To access the full report, please go to:

http://www.uni-muenster.de/imperia/md/content/ifpol/innosi/germany_mamba.pdf

For further information on InnoSI: Innovation in Social Investment: approaches to social investment from the scientific perspective, visit our website at <http://innosi.eu/>

You can find the case study description also in German at <http://www.uni-muenster.de/IfPol/InnoSI/index.html>.

To view the Community Reporting video with a personal experience of the case study please follow the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORzdaExt3WA&list=PL1vtHOjD7gN1wSC3gh-V9TiOq075zzP4P>

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