



Local transport has priority

The job training scheme “Bridge into the labour market” provides vocational integration of refugees to support public transport



iQ | GOOD PRACTICE in a nutshell

Addressees for transfer:
Companies from the transportation
and communication sector

Job training scheme “Bridge into the labour market”

From 2016–2018, the job training scheme “Bridge into the labour market” (Brücke in den Arbeitsmarkt) supported refugees in their ambition to become employed as bus drivers with a transportation company in Mainz. With the guarantee of an employment contract, participants were taught the technical language to prepare them for their work as bus drivers. Company visits and work shadowing enabled them to familiarise themselves with company processes and requirements, and with their rights and obligations as employees. The transport company was also supported in its process of intercultural opening.

Project:
Brücke in den Arbeitsmarkt

Provider:
ARBEIT & LEBEN gGmbH

Project partner:
Sibel Soyer / Hintere Bleiche 34 /
55116 Mainz / Tel.: 06131/14086-36 /
s.soyer@arbeit-und-leben.de

Provision:
The brochure for the project is available at https://www.iq-rlp.de/images/content/Publikationen/2018/2018_05_25_Broschuere_Modellprojekt_Bruecke_IQ_Style.pdf. The exam preparation curriculum is available here: https://www.arbeit-und-leben.de/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/2019_05_16_IQ_Broschuere_Bruecke_web.pdf. All previously published IQ Good Practice examples can be found at www.netzwerk-iq.de.

Starting point/challenge

For some years now, the public transportation services provider Mainzer Verkehrsgesellschaft (MVG) has been recruiting foreign skilled workers to meet the demand for qualified bus drivers. The MVG identified this additional recruitment potential in the immigration of asylum seekers back in 2015 and began approaching refugee accommodation centres to find appropriate applicants. ARBEIT & LEBEN gGmbH is the provider of the project “Bridge into the labour market” in the Network IQ Rhineland-Palatinate, and was brought in to deliver technical language content and to support the process at an operational level.

Implementation of the scheme

A company with a need for skilled workers such as Mainzer Verkehrsgesellschaft (MVG) is a real advantage when it comes to successfully training refugees to work as drivers. MVG committed in advance to recruiting and supported the training process throughout. As a company, MVG is also very open in an intercultural sense and is prepared, with support, to take a further step forward in terms of the openness of their corporate culture. The aim was that 20 refugees each year would be trained in the (technical) language needed for them to be able to cope independently with the communication requirements of everyday working life as a public service vehicle operator in local transport. The objectives had to be redeveloped and restructured at all levels. The individuals selected not only needed to know how to transport passengers from A to B, they also needed to be able to respond safely and constructively in the wide range of different communication contexts. These range from day-to-day communication through to technical discussions. Following a competence assessment and having determined the language requirements of participants, the focus of the training content was technical language and vocational preparation. This also included preparation for tests and examina-



tions such as a driver's licence as well as modules on rights and duties such as work safety, business culture, formal and informal work processes, communication and information for passengers. The participants were all males aged between 21 and 57. Most came from Syria and were likely to be granted permanent residency in Germany. To work as a driver, you need to pass the Chamber of Industry and Commerce examination as per the “Professional Driver Qualification Act” (Berufskraftfahrerqualifikationsgesetz). The examination is very demanding in terms of language and in particular theory, and is a major obstacle for non-native speakers. In order for participants to be better prepared for the examination, a special module on specific exam preparation was developed and used successfully. This resulted in a curriculum for the transfer of knowledge.

Conclusion

Of the 31 participants, seven started training and 18 were appointed as bus drivers between 2016 and 2018. An intercultural process of change was encouraged and supported in the company and this facilitated the professional integration of the new personnel.

Local public transport sector as benchmark

“I liked the job immediately”: Getting started as bus driver: Ireos Muammar from Syria shows how it’s done

In 2015, Ireos Muammar left Syria with his family. In Syria, he initially worked as a sound technician. When war broke out there was no longer work for sound technicians and he earned his money doing driving jobs. “Getting along here was hard to start without any help. The bureaucracy seemed like a real jungle to us.” He was therefore pleased to come across ARBEIT & LEBEN in 2016 and, by the end of that year, was able to start the training course by taking part in the language class. Work shadowing at the public transportation services provider Mainzer Verkehrsgesellschaft (MVG) convinced him that he wanted to work as a bus driver. “I liked the job immediately,” he commented, referring in particular to support from ARBE-

IT & LEBEN and from MVG. Before being appointed by MVG in 2018, he had to complete several tests and examinations such as the category D driver’s license and the passenger transport examination set by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce. “I passed all the tests and examinations on the first attempt,” he says proudly. And he recommends to all participants that they should only take an examination if they understand the questions correctly. Sylvia Pyzik, one of



the initiators of the cooperation project is full of praise: “Employees such as Ireos Muammar are a real asset to the MVG. It’s great to see how he has integrated as a fully-fledged employee in the everyday life of the company.” The company was one of the first to identify the potential for skilled worker recruitment represented by refugees. The outcome speaks for itself. Seven individuals were able to move on to the training, 18 participants now have an employment relationship subject to social security contributions. The MVG initiative together with a training provider are taking this different approach to personnel recruitment and this may serve as a benchmark for the entire local public transport sector.

Three questions for Doris Hormel, head of the project “Bridge into the labour market” in the Network IQ Rhineland-Palatinate

“Willingness to cooperate is a success factor”

What is innovative about “Bridge into the labour market”?

The training was implemented holistically and from a single source. Expertise provided in both language training and in personnel and organisational development meant that the company could be provided with specific support. The goals were to prepare for integration at an operational level as well as to provide trainees with language and technical training. To support the process, ARBEIT & LEBEN reviewed the company’s objectives and the needs of participants, and designed the training in this basis. Regular milestone discussions took place with the company’s personnel management throughout the period in order to review objectives.

What is particularly important for the knowledge transfer from “Bridge into the labour market”?

An interculturally open company which needs skilled workers and which has made a commitment to recruit is a key success factor. As far as possible, it should be clear which personnel are responsible and sufficient resources should be provided for supporting the process over the long term. Ideally there should be mentors within the company with native-speaker competence and there should be

a willingness to provide work-related language teaching. The success of this collaboration proves this. The training has now been implemented in the district of Mayen-Koblenz by the job centre and the Rhein-Mosel transport association with support from ARBEIT & LEBEN.

What can be accomplished over the long-term with “Bridge into the labour market”?

First and foremost, refugees are integrated into the primary labour market and in this way are able to increase their chances of participating in society. At a structural level, the close support provided to public transportation services provider Mainzer Verkehrsgesellschaft (MVG) in their process of intercultural opening has led to long-term effects. Concise documentation was prepared in order to record the processes involved in the job training scheme.



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Authors: Christiane Tieben-Westkamp (ebb GmbH), Sibel Soyer (ARBEIT & LEBEN gGmbH)

Editors: Christian Zingel (ebb GmbH)

Photos/Illustration: R. König (ARBEIT & LEBEN gGmbH), Julia Schlax (RockAByte GmbH)

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www.netzwerk-iq.de

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