



Intercultural Integration via E-Learning and Online Conferences - a Case Study on the Institute of non-profit Service, Germany

Markus Launer, Joachim Delekat and Frank Nierath

Institut für gemeinnützige Dienstleistungen gGmbH, Germany

Institute of Service Management , Germany

Email - markuslauner@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The Institute for non-profit Services gGmbH (www.InstitutfuerDienstleistungen.de) in Germany provides E-Learning Services for refugees and migrants coming to Germany with the support by Niedersächsische Lotto Sport Stiftung in Hannover since 2016. The intercultural integration became an important issue in Germany with the refugee crisis in 2015. Millions of refugees came to Germany due to crisis in their own countries, mainly young men from Syria and Afghanistan. It became a crisis not due to masses of refugees but of the different cultural background and religion of the refugees. In addition, Germany was not prepared for this task. The migration stream before were rather small or not problematic, e.g. the streams from Turkiye and Italy in the 60ies (Gastarbeiter), Vietnamese during the Vietnam war by the USA, and the war in Yugoslavia. In 2015, there were basically no integration concepts and almost no integration worker. The Institut für gemeinnützige Dienstleistungen gGmbH (Institute for non-profit Services) started therefore 2016 a new integration program. At the same time, many integration projects were started in Germany. Many of them still exist today and handle the next refugee crisis due to the war in Ukraine, mainly female refugees with children. In addition, more refugees came from Syria and Afghanistan and masses of migrants from Africa. This paper describes descriptively the case study of the Institute for non-profit Services, the constant changes in the program due to different challenges and the professionalization of the program.*

Key Words: *E-Learning, non-profit Services gGmbH, integration courses, ukraine war, refugees.*

1. INTRODUCTION :

The Institute for non-profit Services gGmbH (www.InstitutfuerDienstleistungen.de) in Germany provides E-Learning Services for refugees and migrants coming to Germany with the support by Niedersächsische Lotto Sport Stiftung in Hannover since 2016. First it was administered by the Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences and since 2018 as an independent Institute for non-profit services in the form of an gGmbH.

The integration work became important in Germany with the refugee crisis in 2015. Never before Germany faced such a massive integration stream. The known migration streams such as the Gastarbeiter from Turkiye in the 60ies were rather small. The refugees coming firm Vietnam in the 80ies were not a problem as well. Interesting to mention is, that the refugee crisis from Jugoslavia with over one million refugees was not a problem at all. The following graph shows the massive migration of young men from Islamic states such as Syria and Afghanistan. For the first time, migration to Germany was discussed as a problem that needs to be solved. Thousands of volunteer helpers and Integrators started to welcome the refugees and helped were ever they could. Now it became clear, that migration needs to be organized properly.

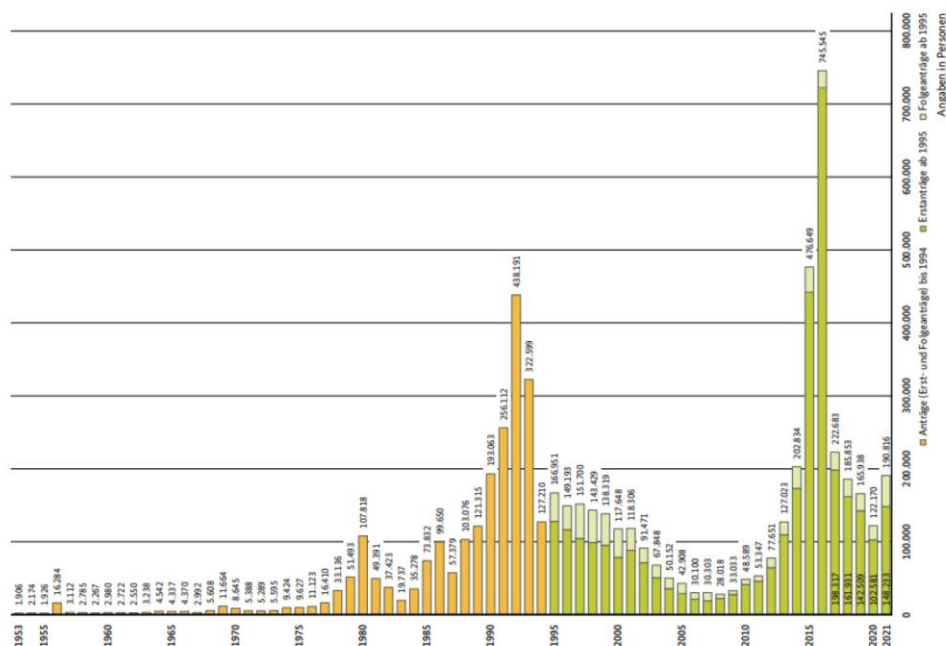


Abbildung 1: Flüchtlingsströme nach Deutschland 1953 – 2021 (vgl. bamf.de, 2021)

2. Analysis of the Integration Activities :

Activities during the Refugee Crisis 2015-2017

The activities of the Institute can be structured in three phases. Phase one was the arrival of refugees from Syria and Afghanistan in 2015-2017. Phase two was the integration of the refugees into the labor market. Phase three was the start of the Ukraine war in 2022.

In phase 1 with the arrival of masses of refugees, the integration of people with very different background and religion was the key issue. Therefore, the Institute offered different integration courses. First, the managers of the Institute, Prof. Dr. Markus Launer (Managing Director) and Dipl.Vw. Joachim Delekat (Project Manager) supported the arrival program in Uelzen 2015-2016. Hundreds of refugees arrived in the small town Uelzen. Later, Launer and Delekat organized a program and held a program session in Uelzen in 2016. Program Director and Train-the-Trainer for the program was Joachim Delekat. Experts in the respective fields were hired. Most important was the basic training Intercultural Integration administered by Dr. Noeme Hermeking. It was a more theoretical training as a basis for all other courses. Second was a more pragmatic course in Intercultural Communications offered by Pari Niemann. To better understand the juristically issues, a specialist was hired from the Ausländeramt Uelzen (administration of foreign affairs) Bachir Yzidi. It was important to understand the practical implications of the Asyl Laws. It is important to mention, that this were mainly young men that wanted not only to flee from their respective country but also wanted to be integrated and achieve professional goals.

The Multiplier Model

In the first phase of the refugee crisis, the key teaching concept was a train-the trainer model. It was important to very fast train so called Volunteer Integrator. They helped voluntarily all over Germany in thousands of Groups without professional training. At this time, the students of the Institute in 2015-2017 were Volunteer Integration and helpers (Integrators). Most of them were volunteers without former training. The first basic model was to train about 10 Integrators online via E-Learning. These 10 Integrators became multipliers and were able to train another 10 more multipliers each in their respective region in presence (10 x 10 = 100). Each Integrator than could take care of about 10 refugees (100 x 10 = 1000). In 2016-2017 the Institute actually trained about 100 Multipliers leading to 1000 qualified Integrators (100 x 10 = 1.000) helping 10.000 refugees (1.000 x 10 = 10.000).



Integration into the Labor Market 2018-2019

In the second phase of the refugee crisis, the Institute offered a program to integrate the refugees into the labor market starting in 2018. Lectures in International and Intercultural Management were offered by Markus Launer as theoretical basis. The personnel training was performed by Dr. Anne-Kathrin Auer for the departments of companies. Joachim Delekat trained the refugees personally. Most important were the questions how to write an application, how will the interview be, and what to expect at the beginning of the new job. This was important to integrate the already culturally integrated refugees and migrants into the professional labor market in Germany 2018-2019. In this phase, the refugees were trained personally and directly. Therefore, OStR Frank Nierath started an additional training in German culture, which led later to the course *Leben in Deutschland* (Living in Germany). In addition, the Institute offered a training in German history by Dr. Alexandra von Ilsemann.

Ongoing Training since 2020

Ever since, the Institute offers a standard program in integration courses. In Germany developed plenty of integration courses privately and organized by the government. Therefore, the basic training was and is covered well. Therefore, the Institute offered a niche program in addition to the existing courses. Frank Nierath developed a course based on German and Austrian lyrics and music. This program was not only accepted by refugees but also lots of people interested in music, arts, and lyrics. Delekat concentrated of an additional course on *Leben in Deutschland* (Living in Germany). This course is a pre-requisite to apply for German citizenship. The German citizenship can be applied for after 6-8 years being in Germany and after 3 years when married with a German citizen. The government offers this course as well, however, Delekat is a specialist in government and political law. This course was not only for people in an integration and application process but for people interested in politics. In addition, we are supported by country delegates such as Dirk Böse for Latin America and Devonry Legarte for Asia. Legarte runs on Facebook an online Group called “Asian in Germany”. This was to maintain the integration program.

Ukraine War and a second Refugee Crisis since 2022

In 2022, a new refugees crisis hit Germany with the war in Ukraine. About 1 million refugees came from Ukraine to Germany. These refugees were mainly women with children. In this case, the refugees were already familiar with our culture. The women integrated rather smoothly into the labor market and the children were included into the German schools (inclusion). In this case, the language training was most important.

In addition, a Zoom Lecture Series was offered by Launer and a international Group of professors for Ukraine lecturers. Out of this lecture series a new research project was applied for and approved with Prof. Marja Nesterova from Dragomanov Ukrainian State University working as the Head of the Centre of Social Innovation in Education and Head of Laboratory at the Research Centre of Cognitivism. In addition, a lot professors from Ukraine could network with colleagues around the world and many of them participate now in the international Workshops and the CoSiM Conference.

3. Analysis of the additional Activities :

Starting in 2016 in Uelzen, Launer started with local, national and later international Workshops at Ostfalia University which lead to international Conferences, later called international online Conference on Contemporary Studies in Management (CoSiM) in the Institute.

International Conferences on Contemporary Studies in Management (CoSiM) 2020-2023

Due to the pandemic starting in 2020, physical workshops of Prof. Launer could not be held locally anymore. Therefore, an online Conference was offered via Zoom. The first Conference took place online in November 2020 at Ostfalia University. The international Conference, however, had to be outsourced from Ostfalia University and organized in the Institute. The Conference was later renamed international Conferences in Contemporary Studies in Management (CoSiM). The concept ever since stayed online and is free of charge due to the support by Niedersächsische Lotto Sport



Stiftung in Hannover. The Conference started with over 50 participants presenting their research. In 2023, the Conference grew to over 65 participants from 26 countries, selected from over 100 applications.

Currently applicants from all over the world are applying to Prof. Dr. Markus Launer for the international Conference for Contemporary Management (CoSiM) <https://institutfuerdienstleistungen.com/en/7th-conference-2023/> and <https://www.facebook.com/DigitalTrustandIntuition/>. The organization of the Workshops and Conference is performed by the Institut für gemeinnützige Dienstleistungen gGmbH (Institute for non-profit Services) <https://institutfuerdienstleistungen.com/en/homepage/>.

Launer, Delekat, and Nierath are very happy so many professors from all over the world participate now in this CoSiM online Conference in such a small Institute. This is due to extensive privately financed travelling to international Universities by Launer. This way, a global network network of researchers supporting now the idea to present their extended abstracts and papers in Germany online. Special thank go to the newly established Editorial Board with the following Collaborators:

- Prof. Dr. Joanna Paliszkievicz, Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Management Institute, Poland
- Prof. Dr. Marja Nesterova, Dragomanov Ukrainian State University, Kiev, Ukraine
- Prof. Dr. Dave Marcial, Silliman University, Philippines
- Prof. Dr. Fatih Cetin, Baskent University, Turkiye
- Prof. Dr. Kandappan Balasubramanian, Taylor`s University, CRiT Institute, Malaysia
- Prof. Dr. Erik Capistrano, University of the Philippines, Virata School of Business, Manila, Philippines
- Prof. Dr. Meltem Huri Baturay, Atilim University, LET IN R&D, Turkiye
- Prof. Dr. Kuanchin Chen, Western Michigan University, USA
- Prof. Dr. Bo Aquila Yang, Beijing Open University, China
- Prof. Dr. Joeffrey Maddatu Calimag, Kyungsung University, Korea
- Prof. Dr. Frithiof Svenson, HVL Western Norway University, Norway

A Review Team had to be organized to proceed the double-blind anonymous reviews. Prof. Fatih Cetin from Baskent University organized a special international Review Team. In addition, may volunteer helpers proof-read the extended abstracts and papers. Today, the Scientific Committee and Review Team consists of

- Prof. Dr. Fatih Cetin, Nigde Omer Halisdemir University, Turkiye (Head)
- Prof. Dr. Dave Marcial, Silliman University, Philippines
- Prof. Dr. Erik Capistrano, University of the Philippines, Manila
- Prof. Dr. Frithiof Svenson, HVL Western Norway University, Norway
- Dr. Joanna Rosak-Szyrocka, Czestochowa University of Technology, Poland

Around the World, around the Clock

The CoSiM Conference is organized around the world around the clock in a 36 hours conference. Each session is lead by a Session Chair responsible for the invitations, organization, and moderation.

- Ukraine: Prof. Dr. Daria Suprun – National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine
- Eastern Europe: Dr. Joanna Rosak-Szyrocka, Czestochowa University of Technology, Poland
- Western Europe: Prof. Dr. Frithiof Svenson, Germany
- Latin and Northern America: Prof. Thorben Stemme, Americana University, Paraguay
- North West Asia: Prof. Dr. Joeffrey Maddatu Calimag, Kyungsung University, Korea
- South East Asia: Prof. Dr. Dave Marcial, Silliman University, Philippines
- Western Asia: Dr. Mohammad Daud Ali, University of Haripur, Pakistan
- India: Dr Shailja Vasudeva, Shaheed Captain Vikram Batra Government Degree College, India
- Middle East: Tuba Kizilkan, İngilizce Öğretmeni, Turkiye, and Azra Tajhizi, Azad University of Maragheh, Iran



4. Results :

The Institute for non-profit Services had to adapt to the needs of refugees and migrants almost every year. All researchers had to be flexible and adapt their program to the current challenges. International Conferences made it possible to much better understand the problems from its origin. Speakers from all over the world discussed online current issues and challenges. This made it possible to better orient the programs of the Institute.

5. Conclusion :

This Case Study shows the challenges of a non-profit organization in form of an Institute and gemeinnützige gGmbH (non-profit organization). The different and ever changing challenges and requirements were shown over time. It gives an example for all non-profit organizations developing as a start-up without state funding and international Conference Management independent and fully externally from Universities..

REFERENCES:

1. Anantamongkolkul, C., Butcher, K., & Wang, Y. (2019). Long-stay tourists: Developing a theory of intercultural integration into the destination neighbourhood. *Tourism Management*, 74, 144-154.
2. Apanasyuk, L. A., Soldatov, A. A., Kireeva, I. A., & Belozertseva, N. V. (2017). Problems on training specialists in the social and economic area for intercultural integration in the context of staff mobility. *Espacios*, 38(33), 26-26.
3. Bråten, O. M., & Everington, J. (2019). Issues in the integration of religious education and worldviews education in an intercultural context. *Intercultural education*, 30(3), 289-305.
4. Chau, T. H. H., & Truong, V. (2019). The integration of intercultural education into teaching English: What Vietnamese teachers do and say. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(1), 441-456.
5. Colón, M., Veloria, C. N., Pica-Smith, C., & Contini, R. M. (2022). A Systems 'Analysis of Latine Education in Massachusetts: A Call for Critical Intercultural Integration. *International Migration*.
6. Contini, R. M. (2013). New generations and intercultural integration in a multi-ethnic society. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 93, 1819-1829.
7. Evanoff, R. (2006). Integration in intercultural ethics. *International journal of intercultural relations*, 30(4), 421-437.
8. Guidikova, I. (2014). Cultural diversity and cities—the intercultural integration approach. Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies Research Paper No.
9. Guidikova, I. (2015). Intercultural integration: A new paradigm for managing diversity as an advantage. *Interculturalism in cities: Concept, policy and implementation*, 136-151.
10. Guidikova, I. (2018). Intercultural integration: From an ideology of the oppressed to the mainstream. *Intercultural Cities: Policy and Practice for a New Era*, 55-63.
11. Kyuchukov, H., & New, W. (2017). Best practices: intercultural integration of Arabic refugees in Berlin. *Intercultural Education*, 28(2), 219-223.
12. Rania, N., Migliorini, L., Rebora, S., & Cardinali, P. (2014). Enhancing critical dialogue about intercultural integration: The Photovoice technique. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 41, 17-31.
13. Watt, P. (2006). An intercultural approach to "integration". *Translocations*, 1(1), 154-163.
14. Wood, P. (2010). Intercultural cities: Towards a model for intercultural integration: Insights from the intercultural cities programme, Joint Action of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Council of Europe.