



Documentation

EPIM Network Meeting

By Pauline Matzke



Place: German Children and Youth Foundation
Tempelhofer Ufer 11
10963 Berlin

Refugio Berlin
Lenastraße 3-4
12047 Berlin

Date: April 18th to April 20th, 2018

Gefördert von:

| BertelsmannStiftung

deutsche kinder- und jugendstiftung

Programme

Wednesday, April 18th, 2018

German Children and Youth Foundation

2 pm to 3 pm

Arrival and registration
- Tee/ coffee and snacks

3 pm to 4 pm

Welcome Speech / Wilke Ziemann (DKJS)
- Introduction of the German Children and Youth Foundation as a player in the field of working with young refugees

4 pm to 4.30 pm

Coffee break

4.30 pm 6.30 pm

Introduction of the participants and their activities
- Dedalus Social Cooperative Italy
- Faros Greece

7 pm to 9 pm

Cultural programme with dinner
- @ Kreuzberger Himmel by "Be an angel e.V." (hospitality project run by refugees)

Thursday, April 19th, 2018

Refugio Berlin

9 am to 9.30 am

Arrival and registration
- Tee/ coffee and snacks

9.30 am to 11 am

Input: Participation in local governance/
Judith Strohm and Viola Schlichting (DKJS)
- followed by question-and-answer session

11:30 am to 12 am

Introduction of the participants and their activities
- Gemeinsam Mittendrin Gestalten (DKJS)

12 am to 2.30 pm

Syrian lunch with storytelling-workshop
and living site inspection (Refugio Berlin)

2.30 pm to 4 pm

Interview: Daily life of unaccompanied
minor refugees / Dr. Cicek Bacik (DKJS),
Maria Kloss, Alexander Heinke and Natalino
Bah (shelter for unaccompanied minor
refugees in Weißenfels)

4 pm to 6 pm

City tour with "Querstadtein", a refugee
participation project
-Refugees are showing their Berlin

6 pm to 9 pm

Daily closing and Dinner

Programme

Friday, April 20th, 2018

German Children and Youth Foundation

9 am to 9:30 am

Arrival and registration
- Tee/ coffee and snacks

9.30 am to 10.30 am

Participation through soccer / David
Naujeck (DKJS)

10.30 am to 11.30 am

Plenary reflect on session on approaches
and challenges of refugee participation

11.30 am to 11.45 am

Coffee break

11.45 am to 12.30 am

Input: Cultural mediation / Glauco (Dedalus
Social Cooperative Italy)

12.30 am to 1.30 am

Plenary debate session on future
cooperation & Daily closing

1.30 am to 2 am

Lunch

Participants

- Gemeinsam Mittendrin Gestalten / Deutsche Kinder- und Jugendstiftung
- Dedalus Social Cooperative Italy
- Faros Greece
- Social workers and young people from the "Kinder- und Jugendhaus Weißenfels"

Day 1

Welcome Speech / Wilke Ziemann (DKJS)
Introduction of the German Children and Youth Foundation
as a player in the field of working with young refugees

“We have the goal to give every child and every young person in Germany the possibility to be strong enough to go their own way.”



- Activities of the DKJS and how the foundation works
- General situation of young refugees in Germany
- Approach of the DKJS and DKJS programmes that work with refugees and partners

Movie „Berliner Ferienschulen“:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVjF9v2-loc>



Introduction of the participants and their activities

Dedalus Social Cooperative Italy / Glauco Iermano

Team: Lassaad Azzabi, Zoe Giordano, Glauco Iermano

“We also want to them to relax a bit, take back their childhood they lost. Sometimes we just play.”

“I am not going to bring you to heaven in chains. I help you to let you help yourself.”



- History, topics, partners and methodologies of the cooperative
- The sector MSNA and the team of Dedalus
- The daily work with refugees
- The project „Ragazzi Sospesi“ for young people in transition to majority



Movie “Ragazzi Sospesi – Never Alone”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlffP3mT6HY>

Faros Greece / Kenneth Brant Hansen

Team: Danae Serafeimidi, Kiki Serdaridou, Kenneth Brant Hansen

“We want to set light and give them a path on their journey towards a better future, whether this future will be in Greece or some other place.”



- The three projects have mostly the same purpose and approach
- Difference in between Greece and Germany: Most refugees want to move further and will not stay in Greece
- Youngest organisation of the three participants, 4th anniversary was in March, organisation expanded and developed rapidly
- Faros means lighthouse, the project should set light and flatten the path for a better future not only in Greece, but everywhere else
- Initiative came from a Danish girl who saw a lot of people that did not get in touch with the state, health care, social workers etc.

- Opened a day care centre with food, sport offers etc., people slowly got to know them, got trust and Faros found out, how they could help them and started to offer services
- 2015 situation changed → 1 million people came to Greece → chaos
- That changed the work very much, till 2015 they had a stable target group of mainly boys under 18, after the borders were opened everybody left
- Work changed to emergency work because most of the refugees were only there for a very short amount of time
- 2016 the EU made an agreement with Turkey → changed the situation again
- People were stranded in Greece → at that time, the target group they mostly dealt with were families
- They continued the day care centre but also built up a shelter in the centre of Athens
- Additionally, there was the need for a place for single women (with children) → first they built a small family care centre
- Tried to focus on the shelter and day care centre and not to grow too much (quality before quantity)
- All shelters in Greece are run by NGOs or European funding and not by the state, now the state is slowly starting to finance shelters (not running it!)
- Difference between the projects: in Germany and Italy projects try to assist the state and improve it, Greece on the contrary, is not supporting NGOs, there is no good cooperation; involvement is undesired, NGOs do what the state is not doing (housing, education, language...) and so there is no strong central organisation
- 2015 a lot of international organisations came to Greece, now more and more are leaving
- The family centre of Faros became a Blue Dot centre (<https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/blue-dots-that-keep-refugee-and-migrant-children-safe-in-europe/>)
- Most requested were: showers, a mother-baby corner, social workers, advice, promotion of education → in 2016 around 200 people came per day
- Slowly the centre went out of the emergency phase and changed from a drop-in centre to an integration centre → needs assessment, created a daily programme with social activities and educational programmes
- This programme changes according to the actual needs, for example: legal information, language courses, day of exercise for women, beauty day, computer and literacy class
- Social workers go on the streets and try to reach the minors (about 3500 unaccompanied minors live on the streets)
- In cooperation with MIT from Boston they built up a new education centre (get them in, educate them, send them out)

Cultural programme with dinner - @ Kreuzberger Himmel by “Be an angel e.V.” (hospitality project run by refugees)

Project “Be an angel e.V.”: <https://beanangel.direct/>

You cannot say it often enough: All children, also refugee children, have the right to participate.

On a legal basis the rights already exist, but often they are not enforced, especially for refugee children.

Day 2

Input: Participation in local governance / Judith Strohm, Viola Schlichting

“On a legal level the rights are there but many times they are not enforced, especially for refugee children.”



- Introduction of the programme „Welcome to friends – alliances for young refugees “
- Basic concept of participation/ empowerment
- Bottom-up empowerment
- Top-down participation
- Different examples from their daily work
- Three dimensions of participation
- Participation as a sustainable process

Movie about the network in Olpe: <https://www.willkommen-bei-freunden.de/jugendbeteiligung-im-kreis-olpe/>

Introduction of the participants and their activities

Gemeinsam Mittendrin Gestalten (Deutsche Kinder- und Jugendstiftung) – Cicek Bacik

“We try to open up the regulating system.”

- Need for action
- Objectives
- Programme structure
- Project Partners
- Transfer
- Topics of the issue papers
-



Jugendliche ohne Grenzen (Youth without borders): <http://jogspace.net/>

Jugendliche ohne Grenzen is a nationwide merger between young refugees. Founded in 2005, their work follows the principle that affected persons have their own voice and are not in need of any “representative affected-persons policy”. They decide themselves, which forms of action they choose and how they perform those.

Exchange of social workers and young refugees from a shelter for unaccompanied minor refugees in Weißenfels

Questions to Alexander Camilo Heinke (social worker)

Cicek: Alex you have been working now in the children and adult centre in Weißenfels for more than three years. How do you empower your minors? What's your recipe?

Alexander: I'm working with them very close. We talk very much to each other. I want to support them in many ways, for school, finding friends, finding a Club. So that they become a part of the society in Weißenfels.

Cicek: What are the three most important challenges for you in your work with youngsters, coming from different countries? How many children are in your shelter?

Alexander: Now we have ten. But a few months ago, we had about 20 youths in our home. They spoke nine languages. This is one of the main Problems for us. They talk another language like Tigrinya and so we have a big language barrier. It is very hard to overcome this. That's why it's so important that they learn German very fast. Because it is easier for them.

Cicek: We know that it's very important to build trust and have a trustful relationship, to open up these barriers. How do you succeed in building up a trustful relationship?

Alexander: I don't know if it's always successful but what everyone knows is that I'm very honest. If they ask me a question I will answer honestly. I guess after a while they know I'm honest and then trust can develop.

Cicek: What are the experiences that marked you most?

Alexander: This is very hard to say because there are so many moments we had together. Some of them were very happy and others are very sad. What marked me the most is maybe to see how someone succeeds in school. This makes me very happy, to see how someone makes a step forward.

Cicek: What are the problems at school? What are challenges when the youngsters start to learn German, they start going to schools or visit some vocational training?

Alexander: That's one of the main challenges for the young. They need to learn a new language and then they have to go to school. Often, they don't have the time they need for this. They have to learn very fast and not everyone can handle this.

Cicek: You told at the beginning there were 20 young people living in your shelter? Now you are nine. What happened to the others? What are they doing now? Where are they living?

Alexander: Most of them turn 18 and after that we can support them. If they want, they can stay for six months longer and if not, they have also the chance that we take care of them in an ambulant way. So, they go to their own flat and then I visit them and work with them.

Cicek: How many times do you visit them? If they start to live in their own flat or apartments?

Alexander: It depends.

Cicek: I know that it's not easy to extend this help in the frame of the welfare service after 18. What do you do, in order to extend help?

Alexander: We work very close with the youth welfare service and the young people they have to write a request that they need more help and normally they get it. That's why I can do this work in an ambulant way.

Cicek: I spoke to some of the young people in the last years and one of the guy was looking for his sister in another country of Europe. Did you manage somehow to find the traces of the sister? Who should try to help him to find the relatives that are spread in Europe? What's about family reunion?

Alexander: We are in the lucky situation that in Weißenfels there is the German Red Cross and they have a tracing programme. So, we go to them and tell the story of the young man and then they try to find the relatives.

Questions to Natalino Bah (young refugee)

Cicek: Hi Natalino, thank you that you are here again! When did you come to Germany?

Natalino: I come to Germany in April 2016.

Cicek: What is your residency status now?

Natalino: I've been rejected. Maybe they don't believe what I say.

Cicek: What do you do now? Do you go to school in Weißenfels? How do you spend your time?



Natalino: In Weißenfels I go to school. The school where I was before was not good for me. I couldn't understand a lot of things because of the language. There were a lot of people in the class, so the teachers had not a lot time for me. So, I decided to change to another School. In this school now, the teachers have time for me to learn the language, we can repeat a lot. Now I'm in a vocational School. I do three days Job and two days School. I think that is ok for me. It's called productive learning, a kind of new education model.

Cicek: Do you like it now?

Natalino: Yeah, I like it now. And at the end I am able to have a degree and I will be able to have a job where I can work.

Cicek: I heard that you maybe have a place where you can do your vocational training?

Natalino: I expect one. When I have it I will sign my contract.

Cicek: When I heard this news, I was really happy. Because when young people got a negative decision for the asylum, then we only have this one way in Germany to keep them here, through integration at school and vocational training. If they manage somehow to find a place where they can do their vocational trainings, if they manage to have a degree, they will get a status.

Cicek: Do you like Weißenfels?

Natalino: Not much. In Weißenfels it is different from other places, let me say so. In other cities maybe, you will go out and see friends, you meet a lot of new people and make new friends. But in Weißenfels it's not like that. So, in your spare time, the only possibility is to play football and then go home. And your friends you have are all from Africa, Afghanistan or Iran. So, I have no German friend. Because I don't know German people in my age. They don't want to spend time with me.

Cicek: But you are in a mixed school? There are not only refugee children? But still it is somehow difficult to find German friends, even at school?

Zoe: Maybe there are not many youngsters in the neighbourhood, but at school, what is the most difficult thing to get in touch with them?

3+2 regulation

The young refugees get residency permits for three years of vocational training and for two more years to work subsequently.

Natalino: The most difficult thing is that when they stand together and talk, and you come to join them, they leave and go to another place to stand together. They really don't want to be with you or speak with you.

Zoe: Which country did you cross to come here to Germany?

Natalino: Libya, Italy and Austria. But I didn't stay in Austria. I took the train from Italy directly to Germany.

Cicek: Do you have still contacts to your family?

Natalino: No.

Cicek: What about you Hamid? Can you tell us something about you? Which school do you attend?

Hamid: Secondary school (Realschule).

Cicek: How did you succeed to enter the regularly school so fast?

Hamid: I came to Germany very young, with 13, and could learn quickly the German language. And because I could speak the language I could go to that school. In first two years I had some problems because even my German was ok, I still had language problems. But now I have no problems anymore.

Cicek: What are the biggest challenges for you in Germany?

Natalino: One of the big challenges is the language. The school is also very important for me and also the health care is important, because I think everyone needs health care and security. In Germany there is a lot of security for me. Another challenge is to get the documents and to stay in Germany and to do my things.

Cicek: What kind of job do you want to do later?

Natalino: I want to work in a construction market.

Questions to Maria Kloss (social worker)

Cicek: So now I will ask some questions to Maria. She is the deputy chief of this shelter. I would like to ask you how the young people experience this transition from school to vocational training. What are the difficulties there?

Maria: We have now two years of experience concerning this. One of the main problems is that the youths don't know who to believe. There are so many people who say different things to them, so they don't know do I have to believe my caregiver, do I have to believe my friend, maybe my family at home. They get confused due to that. The second big problem is that sometimes the way is locked by certain German authorities. We have problems with the school. One problem of this is, that if a boy with the age of 16 or 17 comes to Germany he is not allowed to go to a regular school, also if he has the mind to do so. That's why Hamid is in a really lucky position, that he came to Germany when he was so young and was able to go to a regular school. But we also have a boy who is really intelligent but has to go into some kind of institution that is preparing you for work. He will get a degree afterwards but it's not comparable to his intelligence. We also had the experience that the authorities for foreigners locked the way for some of our boys. Because they didn't have a status here in Germany and then they said, "no you are not allowed to do vocational training". But we fought for them. They did their way now, but these are some problems.

Cicek: How high is the success rate of young people that start vocational training?

Maria: We don't have experiences concerning this yet but looking out of Weißenfels the rate is pretty high. The problem is the language because sometimes there are only six months or one year in Germany and start their vocational training. In my point of view this is just impossible. The second problem is that they are really put under pressure from

their families at home. Because they are saying "Why are you doing a vocational training? You can go to work and have more money. Why do you go to school? Why do you do this?". And that is also something that confuses their minds.

Cicek: You said that also the authorities are blocking the youngster. Do you have some alliances or partners to improve the situation? Because you have to talk to these authorities and to try to convince them from what you are doing, that its useful.

Maria: We are in the lucky position that our county commissioner is pro asylum. So, if there is a problem with the Foreign Office we can go to him and he says you have to do so, because this boy wants to, so give him a chance.

Kiki: How was the age span in the shelter? What ages do you have in the shelter?

Maria: We used to start with 13 until 18 but now our youngest one is 15 and the oldest one 18. We have the possibility to keep them in our shelter over the age of 18 but the Youth Welfare Office has to say, yes you can stay. It's possible to stay till the age of 25 but you have to ask the Youth Welfare Office every six month again. But there really has to be a need.

Kiki: Alex you mentioned before that the language is a barrier. Of course, I understand, and we experienced that as well in Greece. But I want to ask you, in the shelter, do you have cultural mediators?

Alexander: No

Kiki: That links me to my second question. What is the most common language that you have in the shelter?

Maria: Right now, it's pretty easy because they are in Germany for one or two years and speak German. But before sometimes we were lucky that we had some youngster that spoke English or French and could translate this into their mother tongue. We just work with translate, translate, translate.

Kiki: It is not common in shelters to have cultural mediators? In our shelter for example, we have a shelter for children from eleven to 18. We have a capacity of 22 children. In Greece it's a different situation so as long, a place is empty a new child comes in. We have common languages like Farsi, Urdu. We have translators and cultural mediators for the languages.

Maria: We are in the situation that we have two colleagues from Syria, they speak Arabic, but we only had one Syrian boy. And we have a colleague from Tajikistan and he speaks Russian and Farsi. On the other hand, it is good to have the many languages in the house because then the youths are forced to learn German.

Kiki: That's a good point.

Zoe: How is it to live together of the different ages?

Maria: We try to give a single room to our older ones. That they have their privacy a bit. Because they need more privacy then a younger boy. But still they use the same kitchen, same bathroom.

Lassaad: Are there different rules for the different ages? What is about the general rules for the house and for the guys to go and come back?

Maria: Rules are the same for everyone. The only thing that's different depending on the age is how long they can stay out at night. If someone is over 18 he can also sleep somewhere else, but he should tell us.

Lassaad: Do you have more difficulties with the residents or the institutions? Where are most of the problems?

Maria: I think the main problems with the boys are that they have different expectations than we have. And also know different things from their home. Because you cannot compare a German family with a Syrian family, it's totally different. The problems with the authorities are about the papers. They can only start vocational training if they have papers from their home countries. If they don't have them, we have to go to the embassy

with them. Then the embassy says we can't give him papers if he doesn't have some to identify himself. When we get a paper that we were in the embassy we go with this paper to our Foreign Office and then they say yes you can or you cannot. There is no straight rule.

Wilke: You talked about the situation in school, that there is a problem to get in touch with the German kids. Do you have any possibilities to do something with teachers, that they really care about this? The problem is called racism.

Natalino: One day the teacher told them that all humans are equal, every human being is a human being, we are all the same. So, most of them get it but still they don't speak with us.

Maria: You also have to see that this is not the problem of the kids in school. It's the problem of the parents. And they tell their kids that refugees are taking everything away from them. And the teachers are also afraid that the German kids think that refugee kids are more supported than the others. I had many talks at school and it's always the same.

Cicek: I would like to ask you one last question. The main challenges now in the work with refugee children have shifted from welcome them to give them a new perspective to live here in Germany. I know that you start to implement a new concept of an integration centre, what's the aim behind that?

Maria: Our main aim with our work is to 100% integrate all of them. It will not work to 100% but that's our aim. This does not just mean speaking the language or understanding it. This is also to know about all the rules and standards in Germany and how-to live in Germany, like a German almost. In order to get our boys, there, we try to widen our network constantly and integrate the boys into this network. That's church, football club, music and school. And we also want to give Germans the possibility to come to our house. That's how we get them together. Integration is also something that Germans need. It's not only about refugees.

Syrian lunch with storytelling-workshop and living site inspection (Refugio Berlin)



City tour with “Querstadtein”, a refugee participation project
- Refugees are showing sights of Berlin







Daily closing and Dinner



Day 3

Participation through soccer / David Naujeck (DKJS)

“We use football not only to free the minds, to leave the camps but to offer some other things to refugees.”

- Integration initiative of German football
- Welcome to Football - Programme Objectives
- Welcome alliances
- Examples of their work



Input: Cultural mediation / Glauco Iermano (Dedalus Social Cooperative Italy)

The cultural mediator fulfils an important task in Italy. Glauco Iermano affirms that the cultural mediator should be an immigrant because the persons own experience is unique and individual and is able to help foreigners to get familiar with the country. Cultural mediators are used in different areas: social domain, health issues, work, education, housing...

Italy offers 600 hours training for the cultural mediators. The training is funded by the region.

Kenneth Hansen from Faros (Athens) reports that there is no national law on training for cultural mediators. Greece experiences a lot of challenges, because Greece has no formal qualification for cultural mediators. The cultural mediators in Greece suffer from burnout.

In Germany there is no homogenous regulation for the training of cultural mediators.

The three partners from Greece, Italy and Germany decide that they will work on the subject "cultural mediation" at the next meeting in Athens from 24-26 June 2018.



Picture credit: DKJS

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