

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN THE FIELD OF PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

In response to the invitation by the Commissioner for Human Rights

Example from Switzerland

“Migration=Chance” pilot project

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2005 the city of Zurich established on an experimental basis an Advisory Council of Foreigners (“*Ausländerbeirat*”), composed of 22 members from 19 different nationalities. Given the positive results, the city agreed to pursue the collaboration with the Council. Its new members were elected for the period 2011-14. The Council defends the interests of foreigners and persons with a migration background in Zurich (40% of the city population) with regard to different aspects of the daily life in the city and serves as a dialogue forum between the different communities in Zurich. The Council offers advice to the local government and promotes integration policies.

Whenever unemployment rates grow, young people with no or little work experience are among the category of persons that are hit the hardest. Studies show that young foreigners and young people with a migration background are the most vulnerable group.

Recognizing the specific problems of this category of young people, the Advisory Council of Foreigners decided to become active in this field.

The Council was informed, that a number of small companies would be willing to train school graduates after they finished their compulsory schooling cycle. In the past, interested potential employers were being discouraged by the lack of information on the administrative procedures, the fear of bureaucracy, the language barriers and other obstacles.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The goal of the project “Migration=Chance” was to enable companies, and particularly companies headed by a foreigner or a manager with a migration background, to overcome these barriers and to be able to hire more easily school graduates with a migration background as a trainee. The selected companies should not be too big and employ between 2 and 15 people maximum. Such a traineeship would allow young school graduates or unemployed youth with migration background to gain a first work experience.

The Council functions as an intermediary: It connects the interested companies with the young people on the job market, assists both of them in administrative tasks and liaises with the government administration and concerned schools. The employers receive the necessary training and coaching to be able to hire a young trainee. In order to facilitate the mutual understanding

and to further improve the integration, German language classes are offered to the employer as well as the trainee.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- make better use of those companies whose managers have themselves a migration background by allowing them to hire trainees
- create new trainee places for school graduates with a migration background
- reduce the number of unemployed youth with a migration background
- promote the integration of youth and of employers with a migration background
- show young foreigners or young people with a migration background that it is possible to succeed and to encourage them for their future career.

4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The evaluation of the pilot project proved positive: 12 traineeship places were created. It not only helped young school graduates with a migration background to gain a first work experience, but it also contributed to better integrate the companies headed and/or composed of persons with a migration background into the Swiss system and culture.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The Council's objective was to create 10-15 traineeship places until November 2010. This goal was reached with the creation of 12 traineeship places.

Given the success of the pilot project, the city of Zürich and the Advisory Council of Foreigners decided to continue the project, now entitled "to train together" ("*Gemeinsam ausbilden*"). The objective is to identify 30 small companies with a migration background until 2014, companies that can offer a good qualitative traineeship and are ready to assist the trainee.

The message of the project directed towards young people with a migration background is important for today's society: "We don't leave you behind!"

The pilot project of Zurich has received the attention of the media in Switzerland and is being seen as a role model for other cities. It is considered a "win-win" project.

6. CONTACT

Mr. Francesco Genova
Member of the Board of the Advisory Council of Foreigners in Zürich
Phone: + 41 79 405 87 81
fg.genova@gmail.com
www.stadt-zuerich.ch/integration