
**Passage gGmbH, Hamburg University of Applied Sciences,
University of Frankfurt/Main, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning Hamburg**

Research gone unappreciated

**Six years of the Community Initiative EQUAL:
Also a challenge for science**

**Venue: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning Hamburg
29 November 2007 – 01 December 2007**

Within the European employment programme EQUAL (2002-2007), in the thematic area “asylum” various guidance projects to enhance the vocational skills of asylum seekers and those granted “tolerated status” have been organized. While specific transnational efforts to build on the results and experience gained in the programme and to mainstream them into practice and political decision-making bodies have been initiated, the transfer of the findings provided by EQUAL to science and research is still in its infancy. Though in some countries extensive empirical research on the vocational guidance for asylum seekers has been conducted by several groups in diverse areas, the spreading and critical discussion of these studies in the academic field have not gone far enough. In the networks devoted to the vocational integration of refugees in Europe, however, significant theoretical, empirical and practical results could be obtained, which also have the potential to give a new impetus to social sciences. Moreover, several new questions and problems have arisen in the course of the six-year programme, which should be approached and tackled scientifically as soon as possible.

This conference aims to bring together researchers and practitioners dealing with the topic of flight and its consequences for the European context. It intends to give an overview of the latest developments in refugee research as well as to identify new questions of research and to highlight relevant and innovative fields of research. Reflecting on EQUAL, as a European support programme which has addressed refugee-related problems with particular intensity in the last years – albeit with focus on questions regarding the integration into the labour market –, possible (joint) research projects will be conceived, corresponding research groups be established and preliminary suggestions on how to implement the objectives be encouraged. It is suggested here to divide the efforts and discussions into three primary fields of research:

- (1) **Subject-oriented** research, which focuses on biographical and social circumstances / living conditions of refugees in Europe,; How can the heterogeneity of transnational biographical developments of refugees be approached? What strategies do refugees adopt to deal with the asylum procedure and the given restrictions? How useful are the skills and competencies acquired in the new country for their future development? How do they perceive the receiving society? What are their experiences like?
- (2) **Structure-oriented** studies, which deal with the response of the various social institutions to the needs of refugees: Are institutions open to the specific concerns of refugees, and if so, what exactly do they do? Or do they close their eyes to the interests and needs of refugees, and for what reason? How can institutions develop from refugee-specific bodies to inclusion- oriented bodies ? How are such processes initiated? How can they succeed, why do they fail?
- (3) **Intervention-oriented** investigations, deals with the desired effects and unwanted consequences of practical action. What societal and socio-political theories can be drawn on to approach action concepts of politics, education and medicine? What normative assumptions form the basis for such concepts? What specific strategies for intervention are being developed and how effective are these?

The conference will be held in the form of a workshop in order to facilitate the process of active project work. For structuring purposes the following thematic blocks are proposed:

- **‘Who does what?’** – Presentation of the participants’ own research on the topic of refugees in Europe, short summary of significant results and, above all, comments on questions and research desiderata.
- **‘What can be learned from practical work ’?’** – In impetus -giving presentations on the three research fields, analysing EQUAL, relevant insights into the political and educational measures for the integration of refugees will be summarized, flaws be identified and (new) problems arising from the project work be approached, explained and explicitly formulated as research questions.
- **‘What is our aim?’**– From the variety of ideas, suggestions and concerns, in each of the three fields of research an attempt is made to outline at least one project, to discuss methodological questions and to elucidate possibilities of practical implementation.
- **‘What kind of support do we need’** – In a plenary discussion, the acquisition of research grants and questions with respect to the necessary forms of cooperation, coordination and the organisational structures should be addressed as well as appropriate agreements be reached.

Conference Programme	
<u>Thursday, 29.11.07</u>	
12:30	Arrival, snack, informal get-together
14:00	Welcome reception - <i>Dr Ouane, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Hamburg</i> - <i>Prof. Dr Joachim Schroeder, University of Frankfurt/Main</i>
14:30	<i>Prof. Dr Louis Henri Seukwa, HAW Hamburg</i> Introduction to the conference (latest developments in research and desiderata from a scientific perspective)
15:00	“Who is who?” – short presentation of the participants’ previous research as well as of ideas for future refugee research
17:00	After six years of EQUAL – An impetus to research - <i>Christan Rabergh, Chair of European Thematic Group on Asylum Seekers (EQUAL), Stockholm: Research questions from a European perspective</i>
18:00	- <i>Maren Gag, passage gGmbH: Research questions from the perspective of a development partnership</i>
20:00	Dinner
<u>Friday, 30.11.07</u>	
09:00	Presentation of fields and questions of research Work in three groups (on content and methods)
12:00	Plenary session I: Presentation of issues raised in project Questions, discussion
13:30	Lunch
14:30	Work in three groups (explication, realisation, organisation)
17:00	Plenary session II: Specification of issues raised in project Questions, discussion
20:00	Dinner
<u>Saturday, 01.12.07</u>	
09:00	Suggestions for the terminological and theoretical framework of major concepts (summary of discussions and input) Questions and agreements: - possible subsidies - form of cooperation, coordination - future meetings

13:00	Closing of the conference - snack Possible meeting of a steering group
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Venue:

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
Feldbrunnenstrasse 58
29148 Hamburg

How to get there?

underground line U 1 Hallerstrasse
or underground lines S 11, 21, 31 and railway station Hamburg-Dammtor

Link to the Town Map:

<http://www.stadtplandienst.de/spd20/Map.aspx?sid=75DE7BF21560C0E4346DAA2AB0B7DD5C>