

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



“Journeys to a New Life: Understanding the role of youth work in integrating young refugees in Europe” Expert Seminar 22-24 November 2016, Brussels

Youth NGO initiatives from Austria

Shared by Elisabeth Graf, Don Bosco Youth Net, member of the European Youth Forum network on Migration and Human Rights

Don Bosco für Flüchtlinge

<http://fluechtlinge.donbosco.at/de/home.html>

Don Bosco für Flüchtlinge are German courses for young refugees. The project was started when a lot of refugees came to Austria in 2015, with the aim to contribute to a sustainable inclusion. There are now two intensive courses, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Each course consists of about 8 groups with 6 to 7 refugees and at least one volunteer. The refugees are coming four days a week, while the volunteers attend once a week. The language levels which are taught are A1, A2 and B1.

Goals:

- Learning German (no exams)
- Providing a daily structure
- Provide contact to people from Austria
- Create a big family

Especially the last aim is focused by events like playing table games, football, baking cookies, celebrations and dinner-invitations from families in Austria. All those events are offered in addition to the German lessons. Most of the volunteers are students, so many of them are away from home as well – so Don Bosco für Flüchtlinge wants to create a family for them too. There are meetings for the volunteers to discuss the way of working and share experience.

Another activity was the pray for peace, a Christian-Muslim prayer. Participants read texts in English, German and Arabic and wrote down prayers for peace.

Sale for Youth

<http://www.salefueralle.at/>

Sale for Youth is part of the “Sale für Alle”, a youth centre which also includes after school care (Bildung für Alle) and an Oratory (Sale für Alle von 6-14). Sale for Youth offers young people between the age of 14 and 21 different kinds of teenage activities: playing soccer, volleyball, table games or other games inside, but also tries to help if the young people have problems with work or a looking for a job. It is opening two times a week, on Monday and Thursday evening with mainly volunteers who take care.

In June 2015, a refugee camp close to the Youth Centre, which is placed in the 3rd district of Vienna, opened. Sale for Youth invited young people who were just coming to Austria and staying in the refugee camp to spend their time in the Youth Centre. From around 20 members before the number of young people coming rose up to around 50 to 60. It was that time when the team of volunteers needed to be expanded and when the decision to open a second day per week was made. By meetings with other Youth Centres and a training with a psychotherapist with the team on how to work sensitive with people who might have traumatic experiences preparations to the new situation were made.

Aims:

- Experiences in an age-appropriate way
- Practice language (conversations, help with homework)
- Experience with new culture, e. g. coloring eggs at Easter
- Make new friends
- Discuss religion in a conscious context