



# AMIGA

Active Migrants  
in the Local Labor Market

## Strategies to support migrants in the labor market

Experience with the AMIGA project in the context  
of old and new migration cities in the EU

In cooperation with



UNIWERSYTET  
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W POZNANIU





# Preface



Forecasts by IAB (the Research Institute of the Federal Employment Agency) and other respected institutes indicate that the shortage of qualified labor in Germany will become much more severe in the years ahead. This development is naturally also reflected on the Munich labor market. According to IHK-Fachkräftemonitor Bayern (a forecasting tool used by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria to predict the supply and demand of qualified labor), the Munich region will, as an annual average, be short of a good 60,000 qualified workers by 2020. In 2030, 97,000 vacancies for qualified workers are likely to remain unfilled. The relative shortfall will be worst of all among academics. In response, the practice of recruiting qualified labor from abroad will therefore gain in importance. While only 22 percent of German companies currently employ qualified labor from abroad, 31 percent plan to do so in the future.

In the shape of the AMIGA project for “Active Migrants in the Local Labor Market”, the Department of Labor and Economic Development has intensified its activities to recruit and secure an adequate labor pool in a key area. AMIGA seminars, a mentoring program and job fairs organized in cooperation with the Employment Agency Munich all help to tap the potential that qualified migrants in Munich afford the local labor market. These activities also promote dialogue between qualified migrants and local employers, as well as helping international graduates and students to become integrated in the labor market. At the same time, the AMIGA project has strengthened local government’s efforts to build a culture and structures that are genuinely welcoming to qualified migrants.

AMIGA is a collaborative European project between the City of Munich’s Department of Labor and Economic Development and the Centre for Migration Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. AMIGA is cofinanced with funding from the Bavarian Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, the Family and Integration and from the European Social Fund. The City of Munich’s Department of Labor and Economic Development provides funding for AMIGA within the framework of the Munich Employment and Qualification Program (MBQ).

This report contributes to our efforts to respond to the challenges associated with the shortage of qualified labor on the Munich labor market. It provides an overview of the strategies developed and implemented locally and outlines the focal issues in transnational dialogue and experience sharing with regard to developing potential labor and helping qualified migrants to become integrated in the labor market. It also identifies examples of good practices and examines the extent to which the findings and results of the project partners could be transferred to other cities and regions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josef Schmid". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Josef Schmid  
*Deputy Mayor of Munich*

# Acknowledgments

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We are grateful to GründerRegio M e.V., our operational partner in Munich, especially to Bettina Wenzel and Frank Strathmann for their willingness to start the project and for their fruitful cooperation.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the AMIGA teams in both cities (about the authors and other AMIGA team members see Appendix 1).

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Editorial team: Ulrike Schulz, Karolina Sydow, Magdalena Ziolk-Skrzypczak

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AMIGA - Gemeinsam aktiv auf dem Arbeitsmarkt



**Gemeinsam aktiv auf dem Arbeitsmarkt**  
Mit diesem Ziel tritt das Projekt AMIGA an, das qualifizierte Migrantinnen und Migranten beim adäquaten Einstieg in den Münchner Arbeitsmarkt unterstützt. München braucht gut ausgebildete Arbeitskräfte.

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# 1 Introduction to the project AMIGA

*Karolina Sydow/Magdalena Ziolk-Skrzypczak*

This publication summarizes the experience and findings of the transnational project AMIGA Active MIGrAnts in the Local Labor Market, which was conducted in two cities in two neighboring countries: Munich in Germany and Poznań in Poland. Recommendations are also made on the basis of the findings.

The project, which ran from June 2013 until May 2015, aimed to develop European strategies to support migrants in the local labor markets in two different European Union contexts: One (Munich) is a city with a tradition of migration, while migration is fairly new to the other city (Poznań). At the same time, it showed how project coordinators on two different levels – the City of Munich’s Department of Labor and Economic Development (RAW) and, in Poznań, the Centre for Migration Studies (CeBaM) at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (AMU) – performed in managing the development of offers for migrants and applying academic research on migration in the daily practice of integration.

The project is cofinanced with funding from the Bavarian Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, the Family and Integration and from the European Social Fund in both Germany and Poland. The City of Munich’s Department of Labor and Economic Development supports AMIGA within the framework of the Munich Employment and Qualification Program (MBQ).



Participants AMIGA seminar Munich



Panel discussion with representatives of industry and commerce, Munich

## AMIGA in its contemporary context

A number of topical issues in Europe's academic, political and economic communities inspired and gave rise to the AMIGA project. They are:

- migrant integration,
- migrant potential and labor market shortages,
- the internationalization of local universities, and
- the European debate on migration and integration between countries with experience of inward migration and countries for which this is a relatively new phenomenon.

Although the debate about integration has evolved rapidly since the end of the last century and through the beginning of this one, the focus of research and new projects on cities as the places where the integration of migrants with the host society actually happens – or at least should happen – is quite new.

Migrant integration is of particular importance for those who value cultural diversity and who wish to foster the coexistence of newcomers with the host society. If they are to become integrated and feel “welcome”, migrants must be able to gain an appropriate social status in keeping with their aspirations, either by getting a suitable job or setting up their own business.

Among other complex dimensions of the integration process, socioeconomic integration – including integration in the labor market – is considered to be the first crucial step toward establishing a person's position in a society. If members of a migrant minority and others in similar positions have the same life chances in the pursuit of contested goods, such as desirable occupations, one can talk about the success of socioeconomic integration in society (Alba, Nee 2003, p. 28).

There is, however, no doubt that most migrants usually find it harder to make themselves marketable. Often lacking a mastery of the language of the host society, to say nothing of the human capital resources necessary for their employment, they usually end up in the secondary sector. Even if migrants possess advanced skills and credentials, these skills may not always be recognized or relevant to the local needs of their new place of residence. As a result, these workers are initially

employed below their educational potential and often simply adjust to the perceived inevitability of going down the career ladder, taking on more and more undesirable work. In the hourglass economy, where there tend to be many good jobs at the top, many bad jobs at the bottom and few options in between, migrants find it even more difficult to escape downgraded job positions and continue to hope for upward mobility.

Migrants' hidden potential has started gaining attention at the time when demand for skills in certain sectors constitutes a major economic challenge in Europe. Surveys of employers indeed suggest potentially significant unsatisfied demand for certain skills. According to the annual Talent Shortage Survey in 2014, 40% of employers in Germany and 33% in Poland reported difficulty filling vacancies (ManpowerGroup 2014). Moreover, in the EU-28, changes in the skill composition of employment between 2012 and 2025 are expected to show a sharp increase of 23% in the share of jobs employing higher-educated labor (OECD-EC 2014, p. 6). While recruitment programs to "import" the best talents from abroad have been booming for many years, policymakers have only recently begun debating the possibility of using the potential of those migrants who are already in the country but whose qualifications have not yet been recognized.

Similarly, moves to integrate international students and encourage them to stay and take up employment after studying in the host country are currently of strategic importance to local economies in the EU. In countries whose student population is in decline, such as Poland, attracting and retaining students from other countries has even become essential in order to sustain a healthy infrastructure of higher education institutions. On the other hand, for countries like Germany, which are hugely attractive to international students, the priority is to motivate international graduates to stay on and fill the skill shortages.

The above topics kindled an interest in implementing an exchange project involving two European partners in Munich, Germany, and Poznań, Poland. These two cities face significantly different migration situations but still seem to share a similar key challenge: finding ways to help migrants become integrated by making use of their potential in the context of employment or self-employment. In addition, the value of international exchange between countries with more and less experience of the issues of migration and integration, gained from European projects on integration policies and practices, was also a source of inspiration to combine the Polish and German perspectives in this project. Although the two cities' perspectives differ considerably, many cross-cutting aspects and common challenges fueled an interest in initiating this transnational cooperation and preparing two applications, one in either country, for European Social Fund backing within the program "Investing in People" from 2007 to 2013. Both applications were highly ranked and accepted, which opened the door to a two-year project and intra-European dialogue between cities with experience of migration („old migration cities“) and cities for which this is a relatively new phenomenon („new migration cities“).



**Mentee and mentor from MigMENT mentoring program    AMIGA team Munich**

Last but not least, it is worth noting that the idea of the AMIGA project was not driven solely by current economic developments, identified local labor market needs and funding opportunities. First and foremost, AMIGA focuses on the individual migrants who may be feeling disoriented in a new situation and a new environment where new rules apply, the language is unknown and cultural habits are unfamiliar. Recognizing that cultural diversity in the workforce and in the daily life of local citizens is at once a challenge, a source of enrichment and a prerequisite for any prosperous European city, AMIGA seeks specifically to support the development of these individuals.

## **Old and new migration cities in the European Union: Different contexts, common objectives**

The terms old and new migration cities are used here and in the AMIGA project to describe the different situations that exist in major urban agglomerations in the old EU member states and the new ones that joined the EU between 2004 and 2013.

### **“Diversification of diversity” and migrant integration in the labor market in the EU**

The addition of new member states to enlarge the European Union in May 2004, January 2007 and July 2013 has definitely contributed to more intensive debate about the EU as a multicultural entity. In some cases it has been compared to the United States: “Diversification of diversity,” an expression originally used in reference to the cultural landscape of the US, is now more often applied to the EU (Martiniello 2006, p. 21). The diversity of the EU is reflected in the cultural heterogeneity of its 28 member states, the diversified scale of migration outside the EU’s boundaries, and differences in individual countries’ practical experiences with migrants. Some new member states, such as Poland, have only recently begun to be faced with immigration, while others, like Germany, have been dealing with immigration and integration challenges for a long time (even though Germany did not start discussing and modifying its national integration policies until the past decade).

Eurostat statistics indicate that, in January 2013, a foreign population of 20.4 million (people with citizenship of a non-member country residing in an EU member state) was resident in the EU-27. This number is equivalent to 4.1% of the total EU-27 population. Germany, for example, has more than 7.6 million non-national residents (9.4% of the country’s entire population), in contrast to only about 58,900 in Poland (0.2% of the total population).<sup>1</sup> However, the latter figure is probably unrealistically small due to the shortcomings of foreigner registration systems in Poland, which cannot be expected to yield precise data.

The number of newcomers, too, is still higher among the old EU member states. In 2012, Germany reported the largest non-national immigration figure (503,600), followed by the United Kingdom (417,800), Italy (321,300), Spain (272,500) and France (211,700). By comparison, non-national immigration to new member states is much lower. Of these countries, Poland experienced the highest influx of non-nationals (81,500) in 2012, followed by the Czech Republic (27,600), Hungary (20,300) and Slovenia (12,300) (Eurostat 2014a).

At the same time, migrant integration in the labor market still needs improvement in the EU. In 2013, the overall unemployment rate in the EU-28 for the 20-64 age bracket was 10.8%. This compares with an unemployment rate of 21.5% among non-EU citizens, the highest unemployment rate by far (having experienced the largest increase in unemployment over the past three years). The unemployment



**AMIGA Poznań started different workshops to support migrant integration in the labor market**

rate was also higher for EU citizens than for national populations: 2.4 percentage points (12.4%) more in 2013 than in 2012. The situation is not much better in Germany, where the unemployment rate among third-country nationals is twice as high as it is among nationals (9.5% compared to 4.8%). For some new EU member states, including Poland, relevant Eurostat statistics are not available (Eurostat 2014b).

Finally, it should be noted that experiences with challenges to the integration of migrants in the labor market differ across the EU countries and their cities. Even in countries with high immigration rates, there are still some agglomerations that have little experience with migrants – certain cities in the former East Germany, for example. Conversely, even the new EU member states naturally also have metropolises with more experience in this area. The Polish capital Warsaw, for example, has long been the most attractive destination for migration to Poland. Notwithstanding, Munich and Poznań more closely reflect the general national situation in either case, representing the old and new migration cities.

## Germany and Poland: Migration and cooperation

Ever since the post-war guest worker programs, which remained in effect until 1973, Germany has been an “undeclared” immigration country. Indeed, it became one of the most important immigration countries in the world (Thränhardt 1995, p. 31). In light of the 2004 Immigration Act, which prepared the ground for a new political integration framework and for new administrative structures to govern integration at various levels, the old, unofficial immigration nation-state of Germany made a breakthrough in the new millennium, launching official debates on both migration and integration.

Germany is now an official immigration country: More and more people are coming to Germany, which, according to the OECD, is the world’s second most popular destination country for migrants. According to the 2013 Migration Report published by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, the year 2013 saw the largest number of migrants arrive in Germany and the highest positive net migration balance since 1993 (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees 2015, p. 7).

Poland, on the other hand, is now considered to be a country undergoing a transition from emigration to immigration, a country at an “embryonic stage” in which emigration is declining and “nucleuses of immigrant settlements are being set up” (Górny et al., (eds.) 2009, p. 4). Poland is still a country with one of the lowest immigration rates in the EU. However, since its accession in 2004, it has begun to be perceived as a potential gateway to the Western world and thus as a transit country. As the Polish Ministry of the Interior confirms, the number of work permits issued to foreigners has increased significantly since 2008 (Ministry of the Interior 2014).

Interestingly, while the Polish government had showed little interest in national migration issues until recently, a surprisingly wide scope of research on migration trends has been conducted either by long-standing or newly emerging migration research centers and bottom-up projects. Important steps at national level were taken when the inter-ministerial Committee on Migration was set up in 2007. The work of this committee resulted in the preparation and adoption of the document ‘The Polish Migration Policy: Current state of play and further actions’ in 2012 and of The New Act on Foreigners in May 2014, which makes living, studying and working in Poland easier than before.

Polish-German relations at both the national and local levels seem to be very dynamic and highly valued. For more than two decades, Germany has been by far Poland’s most important trading partner, with more than a quarter of all Polish exports going to Germany. Similarly, Poland has ranked tenth among Germany’s export trading partners for years now (Federal Foreign Office 2014). Cultural and educational exchange between the two neighbors is likewise intensive at the institutional and local levels. Local dialogue on the issue on integrating non-nationals is fairly new and opens up a promising field for cooperation in addressing common challenges and working out new integration strategies between the old and new migration cities.

### Munich and Poznań: Scale of migration and integration support

The two partner cities in the AMIGA project enjoy a similarly healthy economic position, contrary to the national trend in both cases. They nevertheless differ in terms of the scale of migration and the level to which local integration structures have been developed.

Munich is the third-largest city in Germany, with a population of almost 1.5 million (1,491,962 in 2014). It is one of the most dynamic economic hubs in Europe. A multitude of languages are spoken and countless migration stories are written here. Munich occupies a good geographic location in the heart of Europe, is Germany’s leading university center and boasts a healthy labor market, with one of the lowest unemployment rates of any major city in Germany (5.2% in 2013, compared to a national average of 6.9%). All these factors attract many newcomers to the city.



Organizing informal meetings – a successful approach for building networks among migrants in Poznań

Foreign nationals account for 25.4% of Munich's overall population – three times more than the average share in Germany (8.5%). The largest groups come from Turkey, Croatia, Austria, Italy, Greece and Poland (Munich Office of Statistics).

Compared to other Polish cities, Poznań is in a similarly strong economic position. It is the fifth-largest city in the country (with 546,829 inhabitants in 2014) and serves as a major Polish location for trade fairs and conferences. It is also the country's leading university center. The lowest unemployment rate in Poland (4.2%, against a national average of 13.4% in 2013) likewise seems to attract many migrants to settle here (GUS 2014). The number of migrants is estimated to be at least 5,000 not counting the EU citizens in the city. Due to the aforementioned shortcomings, however, these official figures are probably much too low. There may even be twice as many migrants as official estimates claim, or even more. Most of them come from the non-EU countries of Eastern Europe: Ukraine, Belarus and Russia.

Differing scales of migration in different cities lead to unique conditions for the development of integration initiatives in each case. The work being done to integrate migrants in Munich is not innovative. Integration measures in place today must be seen as the continuation of services offered as far back as the 1970s by many long-standing organizations, such as traditional welfare agencies and civil society initiatives. The more recent official Munich City Integration Policy, ratified in 2008, and a multitude of new migrant organizations are signs of ongoing and intensive development in the field of integration support. The AMIGA project was a response to those aspects of integration that have not yet been covered, and to the need for complementary and/or innovative actions.

In Poznań, by contrast, where the number of migrants is believed to be quite low, no institutional integration framework has yet been developed, let alone a reliable database tracking the number of migrants. Moreover, numerous bottom-up integration initiatives have been cut short due to lack of financial support. Because of the lack of centralized support for many issues other than employment, the AMIGA project in Poznań had to go beyond a focus on integration in the labor market, often providing support for a wide range of issues faced by migrants in a new city. This approach effectively made certain actions more comprehensive.

Despite the differences in the scale of migration and the development of integration support for migrants, the project partners in Poznań and Munich did find some common ground in the services and integration needs of three groups of high-potential migrants, who are a key focus of the AMIGA project:

- migrants with job placement challenges, whose qualifications have not been recognized, who work below their qualifications or have no job at all;
- international students and graduates from local universities who would consider staying in the city if they find good job opportunities;
- migrants entrepreneurs, who add significant value to the development of the local economy and to cities' intercultural life.

## **Project coordinators: Institutional context**

AMIGA integrated two project implementation strategies using project coordinators operating on two levels. The top-down strategy was implemented by the City of Munich's Department of Labor and Economic Development (RAW). The bottom-up strategy was implemented by the Centre for Migration Studies (CeBaM), a research institute at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.

### **Munich: Top-down**

The AMIGA project in Munich, coordinated by the City of Munich's Department of Labor and Economic Development (RAW), is attached to the Munich Employment and Qualification Program (MBQ), one of the City of Munich's key labor market policy instruments. Its more than 110 assistance projects all share a single aim: to improve the employment prospects of those at a disadvantage on the Munich labor market.

The MBQ program helps long-term unemployed persons, people with a migration background, single parents and career re-entrants to search for or return to gainful employment. The MBQ has four focal areas: reducing long-term unemployment, promoting equal opportunities, helping young people master the transition from school to the world of work, and developing skills in the corporate community, including migrant entrepreneurs. The Annual Phoenix Prize for Migrant Businesses, for example, honors extraordinary achievements in business, diversity and social and community spirit. By the same token, it increases public awareness of migrant entrepreneurs' contribution to the local economy. The AMIGA project actions have opened up new areas of support for international students and graduates from Munich universities, while at the same time introducing complementary offers to other MBQ projects that address the other two AMIGA target groups: migrant entrepreneurs and qualified but unemployed migrants.

To realize the practical aspects of the project as efficiently as possible, RAW recruited a reliable operating partner in the shape of GründerRegio M e.V. GründerRegio M is an initiative launched by the Munich region's science and business communities. Its mission is to foster knowledge based spin-offs and start-up companies that are linked to higher education institutions. GründerRegio M is an umbrella organization for key partners from the Munich region, including universities, research institutions, business associations and consultants, venture capital and finance organizations, incubators and technology centers, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the City of Munich. Since 1998, GründerRegio M has focused its activities on guiding potential young entrepreneurs from academia toward a successful career. The main objectives of this initiative are to establish a sustainable culture of entrepreneurship, to increase the number of university start-ups and, in so doing, to promote an infrastructure that reduces the cost and time involved in setting up a company.

## Poznań: Bottom-up

The AMIGA project in Poznań adopts a bottom-up approach. It is coordinated by the Centre for Migration Studies at the Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU) in Poznań. CeBaM's objective is to leverage research and recommendations in order to bring about changes in local policies and encourage greater institutional support for migrants.

CeBaM is an interdisciplinary research unit that studies Polish and international migration patterns, integration processes and multiculturalism. It gathers together AMU scholars from seven faculties, researchers from international partner universities and representatives of Polish research institutes. The CeBaM office is located at AMU's Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology.

The primary aims of CeBaM are:

- to create a database on the state of the art of research projects and publications in the field of migration, conducted in the western part of Poland and at European level;
- to provide information about upcoming local events and conferences on migration and integration;
- to integrate and coordinate interdisciplinary research initiatives to foster networking and the exchange of ideas and best practices in migration research;
- to conceptualize research frameworks for pending migration issues, conduct analysis of research findings and issue recommendations for migration and integration stakeholders at the local level;
- to educate the local community on tolerance, intercultural openness and integration with migrants.

During work to conceptualize the framework of the Polish part of the AMIGA project, the project coordinator at the Centre for Migration Studies relied on the findings of the center's own research among foreigners living in Poznań, and on recommendations derived from this research. Two projects were conducted by the Centre for Migration Studies ("Foreigners in Poland: The heterogeneity of large urban centers – A case study of Poznań" and "Factors Assisting and Restricting the Integration of Third Country Nationals into the Labor Market, the Health Service and Education: An Anthropological Case Study of the City of Poznań"). Additional research was carried out by Poznań City Hall within the framework of the OpenCities project. AMIGA was the first complex and practice-oriented project in Poznań to follow these recommendations and address the issues of integrating foreign nationals and improving their quality of life.

## Overview

This publication is a collective work compiled by many authors on the AMIGA teams who were actively engaged in the practical and research work during the project in both Munich and Poznań. Some of the authors also relied on findings, surveys and reports conducted by other AMIGA members who are not listed as authors in the publications concerned. For a comprehensive list of all contributors, see Appendix 1.

Following on from this introduction, chapter 2 outlines the structure of the project. It begins by focusing on how transnational cooperation between the two cities was organized. It then describes the two local project frameworks, identifying certain similarities and differences. Chapter 3 provides insights into the situation of three target groups and the main challenges they face in the local labor markets, while chapter 4 presents a comprehensive and detailed analysis of all activities completed within the AMIGA project in Munich and Poznań. Finally, based on the research conducted, the practical experience gained and the work done by expert groups in the AMIGA project, chapter 5 proposes recommendations for new and old migration cities in the EU.

It is hoped that the strategies to support migrants in the labor market discussed and proposed in this report will prove helpful for migrants themselves and become useful for municipalities, integration practitioners, policymakers and migration researchers as they revise existing integration structures, introduce needed changes and develop new approaches to migration challenges and opportunities. It is also hoped that the AMIGA project will provide inspiration to continue international cooperation and exchange among the EU countries on the issues of migrant integration in local communities and local economies.

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1) In the interests of legibility, most of the figures quoted in this report are rounded.



## 2

## AMIGA project: Organization and project structure

## Transnational exchange

*Ulrike Schulz/Karolina Sydow*

In the context of this project, European cooperation sought to identify common features of and differences between the migration situation in the “traditional” EU member states and in those states that have joined more recently. It also aimed to promote the sharing of knowledge and experience.

Transnational networking is coordinated by a steering committee. The members of this steering committee are the heads of department, the project leaders and the project managers who oversaw transnational cooperation between the Center for Migration Studies (CeBaM) at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and the City of Munich’s Department of Labor and Economic Development (RAW). While CeBaM and RAW together assumed the role of project coordinators, the structure of the project also involved operational and strategic partners (see figure 1 and Appendix 2).

	Poznań	Munich
<b>Coordinator</b>	Center for Migration Studies (CeBaM), Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań	The City of Munich’s Department of Labor and Economic Development (Referat für Arbeit und Wirtschaft; RAW), Munich Employment and Qualification Program (MBQ)
<b>Operational partners</b>	Poznań City Hall	GründerRegio M e.V.
<b>Strategic partners</b>	Various strategic partners (see list in Appendix 2)	Various strategic partners (see list in Appendix 2)
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To improve migrants’ social and professional integration by raising the level of their professional involvement in the local labor market</li> <li>2. To develop strategies to support migrants in the local labor market, focusing primarily on three target groups</li> <li>3. To provide migrants with better access to information on services and opportunities in the host country</li> <li>4. To establish a model for long-term collaboration with the local institutions that deal with migrants</li> <li>5. To recognize and promote the idea of migrants’ potential and their positive contribution to the host society</li> <li>6. To transfer knowledge and shares best practices</li> </ol>	
<b>Target groups</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. (Qualified) migrants with job placement challenges</li> <li>2. International university graduates and students</li> <li>3. Migrant entrepreneurs</li> </ol>	
<b>Local actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaboration between institutions</li> <li>● Street work</li> <li>● Positive image campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Local network of expert groups</li> <li>● Scouting campaign</li> </ul>
<b>Local service offerings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Access to information: Migrant Info Point (MIP)</li> <li>● Consulting, training, workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MigMENT mentoring program</li> <li>● Job fairs</li> <li>● Seminars</li> </ul>

Figure 1: Structure of AMIGA project in Poznań and Munich



Welcoming speeches at AMIGA job fair in Munich

The German-Polish working groups were tasked with developing shared activities and/or adapting good practices from the various partners in order to achieve the project objectives. To ensure that information was fully and properly shared between the transnational partners, four transnational meetings were planned – two in Poznań and two in Munich – including a conference to present the results and experiences of the project. The national expert groups were able to use a joint website ([www.amiga-project.eu](http://www.amiga-project.eu)), including a virtual collaboration platform (forum), to transfer knowledge and share good practices at the local and transnational levels.

Although there are differences in the scale of migration and in the situation of migrants on the two local labor markets involved in the project, as outlined in chapter 1, the AMIGA partners were nevertheless able to develop common objectives for their transnational work. These objectives were:

1. To improve migrants' social and professional integration by raising the level of their professional involvement in the local labor market (*using the support strategies mentioned in point 2*)
2. To develop strategies to support migrants in the local labor market, focusing primarily on three target groups:
3. Target group 1 – (Qualified) migrants with job placement challenges
4. Target group 2 – International university graduates and students
5. Target group 3 – Migrant entrepreneurs
6. To provide migrants with better access to information on services and opportunities
7. To establish a model for long-term collaboration with the local institutions that deal with migrants
8. To recognize and promote the idea of migrants' potential and their positive contribution to the host society
9. To transfer knowledge and share best practices

## **AMIGA project frameworks in Poznań and Munich**

Since different local labor market situations and conditions prevail in Poznań and Munich, the Polish and German working groups developed certain actions and service offerings whose scope was not identical. Poznań, for example, placed more emphasis on building a central information and service point for migrants. In Munich, where various established institutions already provide consulting and information services, the need was more to build a network between these institutions and add a new or complementary service structure.

### **Poznań**

The activities planned in Poznań were based on three pillars:

- activities that directly address migrants;
- the formation of local networks to cooperate and share experience; and
- activities that address the local society.

Each of these three pillars involved several tasks. Activities that directly addressed migrants aimed mainly at providing better access to information on formal and practical aspects of living in Poland in general and Poznań in particular. Free service offerings for migrants included: an advice and information point, assistance for migrants, Polish language courses, individual job advice, and instruction in Polish labor law and the requirements for self-employment. The main goal of this first pillar was thus to give support to foreign nationals living in Poznań by helping them deal with formal and legal issues related to Polish labor law regulations and the legalization of their stay, as well as assisting them with different aspects of daily life.

The second pillar was connected to the development of a long-term model of cooperation between different institutions and organizations that work with and for migrants in Poznań. This goal was linked to the findings of previous research, which identified a lack of coherent and long-term cooperation between local government and non-governmental institutions that work with migrants. In this context, deficits in the exchange of information between local government offices, organizations and universities were particularly evident. Moreover, since Poznań lacks any coherent policy on migrants, migrant-focused activities tend to have an isolated, one-time character and are usually initiated by non-government organizations.

The third pillar involved activities that address the local society in Poznań. Their main goal is to foster a positive attitude toward migrants, which should in turn nurture a more favorable attitude to foreign nationals on the labor market and encourage more Polish companies to hire them. Media campaigns highlighting diversity and the achievements of foreign inhabitants of the city were the main tool used to achieve this goal. Other activities involved training courses that targeted local government staff and entrepreneurs who already employ or planned to employ foreigners.



**MigMENT:** Meeting of mentee and mentors to share experiences of the mentoring program



Scouts and members of scientific steering committee, Munich

The list of activities undertaken as part of the AMIGA project is long. The most important ones are briefly discussed below.

### First-pillar activities that directly address migrants

#### ■ Access to information

The availability of direct support for migrants in Poznań was very poor and, in some areas, non-existent. Some forms of support were subsumed under general obligations and lay within the jurisdiction of particular local government departments. These services did not specifically address foreign nationals, but were open to all inhabitants of the city and the region. Local government institutions had no service offerings that specifically addressed foreign nationals. At the time when the AMIGA project was launched, there were also no similar initiatives led by non-government organizations. There had been a few in the past, but they were all short-lived and had a very limited scope.

#### ■ Advice and information point

The *Migrant Info Point* (MIP) was the first service of its kind in Poznań. It was open two days a week (for six hours). At the MIP, migrants were supplied with information and advice on formalities and legal issues regarding the legalization of their stay, work, health insurance and the practicalities of daily life, such as housing and public transportation. The MIP also provided information on important places/institutions and organizations that are of relevance to foreign nationals.

#### ■ Information portal

A similar function was served by an information portal ([migrant.poznan.pl](http://migrant.poznan.pl)) that provided information on formal and legal issues, as well as information on the labor market and daily life (the local context in Poznań was taken into account). The aim of this portal was to provide information to anyone who needed it and supply references to specific addresses in Poznań and the Wielkopolska region.

#### ■ Free training, advice and courses

One important aspect of the MIP's activities and website was to provide migrants with access to all the services available within the framework of the

AMIGA project. Migrants could sign up for the following free training, advice and courses (both at the MIP and via the website):

- professional advice: one-hour consultations in English or Polish, which took place twice a week;
- Polish language courses: 480 hours of Polish lessons were planned;
- instruction on starting a business, organized in cooperation with Poznań City Hall (see comments above) and provided in various languages (English, Russian, Spanish);
- individual advice on how to start a business, organized in cooperation with Poznań City Hall; the duration and frequency of advice was adapted to the needs of migrants.

#### ■ **Street work**

This activity was closely connected to the work of the MIP. It complemented the latter's offerings by providing support outside of the MIP office and outside its working hours. Street work also involved reaching out to new groups of migrants, evaluating the support provided and promoting activities undertaken within the framework of the AMIGA project. The tasks assigned to the three street workers, all of them graduates in cultural anthropology, were as follows:

- to give individual and direct information and advice to migrants, accompanying them on visits to other authorities or the completion of other formalities, for example;
- to reach out to new migrant groups and to maintain regular and direct contact with the community of foreign nationals;
- to monitor migrants' situation by means of ethnographic fieldwork, i.e. to recognize the needs of migrants and barriers to integration within the host society, and to assess the efficiency of the support provided;
- to disseminate information about the MIP and other activities related to the AMIGA project.

Support that directly addressed migrants focused on three specific migrant target groups:

1. migrants with job placement challenges;
2. international university graduates and students;
3. migrant entrepreneurs.

We are aware of the fact that the above categories are fluid and may overlap in many individual cases. In the context of direct support, however, this proved to be an effective and valid strategy with which to reach out to as many interested people as possible.



Impressions from transnational meeting in Poznań September 2014

## Second-pillar activities: Building local (and transnational) networks of cooperation and experience sharing

Previous findings showed that, in Poznań, cooperation between different institutions with regard to activities concerning migrants was either incidental or completely non-existent. The city had developed no coherent policy relating to migration and its challenges. All initiatives undertaken in the past had been one-time, isolated projects that lacked any structure. In this respect, Poznań is no exception, as similar patterns can be seen in other Polish cities.

Within the framework of AMIGA, an attempt was made to develop a model for forms of **cooperation between institutions in Poznań**. This mainly consisted of building three teams to concentrate on the three groups of foreign nationals mentioned above. Members of these teams were representatives of institutions in Poznań that serve the needs of migrants and institutions dealing to some extent with the issue of migration: Poznań City Hall (a few departments), the Wielkopolska Voivodship Office, the District Employment Office, the Regional Social Security Center, and representatives of the majority of state-run higher education institutions and other organizations involved in the subject. Regular meetings were to be attended not only by the aforementioned representatives, but also by street workers and people working at the advice and information point. Their role was to serve as spokespersons for migrants and to represent their points of view.

Cooperation within particular teams was based partially on the sharing of experience and on information, consultation and discussion regarding activities that needed to be undertaken. The main goal of cooperation was to draw the attention of different institutions to the importance of issues concerning migrants, and to build knowledge and increase awareness on this subject. The groups were requested to share experience and information about migrants' needs, about barriers they encounter and about the degree to which certain institutions function. They were also tasked with developing proposals for better practices that could be implemented in order to improve the way these institutions work. It is important to look at the issue of migrants and migration from a more holistic perspective, and to understand that this issue requires cooperation between different subjects. It also requires structural solutions, which we consider to be particularly valuable.

Another important aspect was establishing and tightening cooperation between universities and local government departments. From the perspective of the Centre for Migration Studies, it was especially useful to engage anthropologists and demonstrate the positive practical impact of anthropological research on the functioning of local government subjects.

### Third-pillar activities that addressed the local society

#### ■ **Positive image**

Apart from activities that addressed migrants directly and activities designed to build a local network of cooperation, it was also crucial to focus on activities that address the local society – mainly the inhabitants of Poznań and the region. Since Poland has been a very homogeneous country for many years, the number of migrants is small and people are generally not used to their presence. As a result, unfavorable attitudes toward migrants may be encountered among ‘normal’ citizens. At the same time, there is an evident lack of policy concerning the needs of this group, as decision-makers have so far avoided the subject.

Our view is that it is important to foster a positive attitude toward migrants, increase awareness of their presence in the region and underline their contribution to the cultural, economic and intellectual development of the city. Our objective was to draw attention to their potential contribution to their new environment and to initiate activities in different fields, including the labor market.

To achieve these goals, we planned the following activities.

#### ■ **A media campaign**

(in local press and radio) presented a series of different ‘portraits of foreign nationals’. Examples included migrants who took part in the project and whose stories seemed to be either unique or representative of one of the numerous migrant groups. The overall effect painted a picture of an extremely diversified group. Cooperation between our team and journalists was as follows: The AMIGA team presented a clear vision of the desired effect to journalists and put them in touch with specific foreign nationals.

- Another activity was a **poster campaign**. Posters with photographs and information about migrants in Poznań were produced and displayed in public transportation vehicles and at bus and tram stops in an attempt to reach out to as many people as possible.

- We also sought to promote entrepreneurship among migrants by organizing a **competition for the best entrepreneur**. In collaboration with Poznań City Hall, we invited migrants to the Poznań Leader of Entrepreneurship competition, at which four prizes were for the first time set aside for migrant entrepreneurs. This competition is a ten-year-old tradition, and foreign nationals have always



Transnational meetings gave valuable opportunities to discuss strategies to support migrant integration in the labor market and to exchange partner projects experiences

been allowed to take part in it. However, by ensuring that special prizes would be awarded to migrants, and by running an active promotional campaign that directly addressed foreign residents in the city, we wanted to:

1. communicate the message that the city values migrant entrepreneurs; and
2. draw the attention of all local residents to this aspect of migrants' activity, demonstrating that foreign nationals are people who create jobs, pay taxes and serve the society in which they live.

Activities designed to cultivate a positive atmosphere relating to the topic of migration and migrants focused in particular on two specific target groups: **employers and local government staff**.

Training courses were planned for office workers at different institutions who have either direct or indirect contact with foreign nationals. These training courses aimed to make the recipients more sensitive to cultural differences and draw their attention to the peculiarities of this group and of working with migrants.

## Munich

Since the conceptual design of many AMIGA activities was prepared jointly while the project was being prepared, the project framework in Munich was, in some respects, similar to that in Poznań. Nevertheless, the main pillars of AMIGA activities did differ significantly in the two cities. In Munich, a multicultural city, it would have been confusing to formulate any activities that addressed the local society without involving migrants themselves (see statistical data on Munich in chapter 3). Our activities therefore involved the following three main pillars and did not separately address the host society:

1. a local network of expert groups
2. innovative offerings for migrants
3. a scouting campaign to reach out to migrants

### Local network of expert groups

One essential concern of the AMIGA project was to establish a model for long-term collaboration between local institutions that have dealings with migrants. Local expert groups were therefore set up in Munich, with meetings of each group taking place on a regular basis (every six weeks). The following expert groups were set up in line with the three target groups defined for the AMIGA project:

- Expert group 1: Qualified migrants with job placement challenges
- Expert group 2: International university graduates and students
- Expert group 3: Migrant entrepreneurs

The expert groups had different functions and different tasks. On the local level, one key function was certainly the personal sharing of information. Dialogue between the institutions taking part served to strengthen ties between people and organizations working in the same or related fields. Another important task was to gather information about existing offerings to avoid creating wasteful competition between services and to be able to evaluate the success of existing offerings. This was especially important in Munich, where a landscape of support services already exists. A further important assignment was to develop strategies and recommendations for actions to help integrate the target groups in the local labor market.

To provide more detailed information on the needs of the target groups and determine whether existing offerings and information strategies are genuinely reaching the target groups, a series of **surveys** were subsumed under the AMIGA project. Consultation on the process of designing these surveys was another duty of the expert groups.

For target groups 1 and 3 – qualified migrants with job placement challenges and migrant entrepreneurs – the research structure was based on qualitative, in-depth interviews and a preliminary quantitative questionnaire. Examples of the research questions asked are:

- What does the employment of qualified migrants look like?
- Why would migrants like to become entrepreneurs?
- Are there culture-specific characteristics in the search for information?
- What experience do migrants have with the local labor market/starting a business?
- What do migrants know about different advice services and enabling programs available in Munich?

To obtain reliable information about people's motivation for choosing Munich as the place of study, their intention to stay in Germany and what support they need from local government – above and beyond the work of the AMIGA project – an online survey was conducted among target group 2, the international university graduates and students. Its results are expected by the middle of 2015.

On the transnational level, the results from the expert groups will be discussed to determine what findings can be recommended for transfer to other regions or cities.

### Innovative offerings for migrants

The **MigMENT** mentoring program targeted international students in their final semester, graduates and qualified migrants in the city of Munich who were keen to get contacts, coaching and assistance with their career development from experienced mentors in the Munich business community. The AMIGA project team arranged partnerships (known as "tandems") between mentors and mentees. Each partnership developed and grew individually depending on the needs of the mentee and the time that the mentor had available. To enable these arrangements to be monitored, each tandem was required to write reports. AMIGA also developed a set of guidelines for the tandems and organized MigMENT meetings of all mentees and mentors to encourage networking and the sharing of experience.

In Munich, two **job fairs** organized in cooperation with the Employment Agency Munich were planned as part of the AMIGA project. These job fairs for international professionals provided a platform for dialogue and exchange between international students, graduates and professionals with foreign qualifications on the one hand, and companies and organizations representing Munich's business and scientific communities on the other.

During the job fairs, a round of brief presentations outlined employment procedures and local services available to help companies recruit international professionals and integrate them in the labor market. Examples included presentations by the Employment Agency Munich, the Service Center for International Professionals at the City of Munich's Department of Public Order, the City of Munich's Department of Labor and Economic Development and the AMIGA project itself.

**AMIGA seminars** gave the target groups access to important information about work permit and start-up procedures. The scope of the subjects covered in the seminar series was expanded in the course of the project, including current demands on the labor market in Munich, the results of the AMIGA research and experience gained from the scouting campaign.

### Scouting campaign to reach out to migrants

To reach out to migrants, AMIGA adopted the innovative approach of deploying “street workers” in Poznań. By involving the target group in the project structure and its teams, AMIGA created a link between AMIGA – in its capacity as an official offering from a public institution – and migrants. The creation of a network among the various protagonists and the migrants themselves was designed to facilitate access to necessary information and/or advise migrants on where they can turn to obtain this information. The hope was that this would strengthen trust in public institutions.

A team of three specially trained experts with a migration background worked for AMIGA as “scouts” to reach out to both migrant communities and the three focus groups. The scouts’ aim was to guide steer people in the direction of the AMIGA services and support and cultivate lasting relationships with migrant communities. In the context of the AMIGA research referred to earlier, the scouts worked together with the Chair of Education and Empirical Educational Research at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich to analyze the needs of qualified migrants on the Munich labor market.

The above description of the AMIGA project frameworks in both cities highlights both many similarities in the objectives of local actions and, at the same time, the wealth of different methods that can be used to achieve these goals depending on local factors and conditions.



# 3

## Local peculiarities

## Introduction

*Karolina Sydow/Magdalena Ziolek-Skrzypczak*

As we saw in chapter 1, far more migrants live in Munich than in Poznań. This naturally influences both the scale of the integration services provided and, by the same token, the scale of the challenges migrants face in the city.

In Munich, a wealth of support is provided to migrants, though not all offerings are coordinated consistently. Since activities that target migrants are undertaken by numerous organizations and institutions, the various actions and sources of information are necessarily distributed. This creates certain difficulties not only for the beneficiaries (the migrants themselves), but also for the organizations who seek to coordinate their endeavors.

A very different situation prevails in Poznań. When the AMIGA project was first launched here, the support services available to migrants were very poor. There was also a lack of coherent and long-term cooperation between both local government, universities and non-government institutions that seek to assist migrants. Although there were at least some activities to try to help migrants, these tended to be isolated, one-time programs. Filling the many gaps thus constituted both a challenge and an urgent need.

Despite differences in the stage of development of the integration infrastructure in the two cities, AMIGA in Poznań and AMIGA in Munich identified the same three groups as being of primary importance and most in need of support. These groups thus became the main focus of the project. They are:

1. (Qualified) Migrants with job placement challenges
2. International university graduates and students
3. Migrant entrepreneurs

The above categories are obviously flexible and exhibit many overlaps. However, they at least allow the different situation of each group and its peculiar needs and challenges to be addressed specifically.

This chapter describes the situation of and challenges facing all three groups in both Poznań and Munich. The description is derived from statistical data, the experience of and reports published by national and local institutional forms of support, the work of the AMIGA expert groups, research and analysis conducted during the project, and the experience and individual contacts of the AMIGA project teams in both cities.



Flyer from Migrant Info Point (MIP) Poznań



Polish language course in Poznań

## Poznań: Migrants with job placement challenges

*Agata Kochaniewicz*

### Migrants experiencing difficulties on the labor market

Economic considerations are an extremely important aspect of migrant integration. They are measured in terms of labor market activity, income levels and contact with the host society. Estimates indicate that demand for migrant labor will grow in Poland. However, access to the labor market depends first of all on the individual's administrative status and citizenship. Polish regulations governing migrant access to the labor market are currently being liberalized by a raft of measures that are reducing the cost and simplifying the procedure of obtaining a work permit, simplifying the procedure of obtaining a work permit, exempting some categories of migrants from the need for a work permit and gradually broadening the group of people who qualify for what is known as the "simplified system" of employing migrants, based on employers' declarations that they will entrust jobs to migrants. Yet at the same time, the long, drawn out procedures that are still needed to legalize migrants' stay in Poland continue to hinder and slow down their professional development.

As a general rule, EU citizens have unlimited access to the Polish labor market, while non-EU citizens have to apply for different kinds of work permits (although there are some exceptions to this rule).

**The legal status of migrants in Poland plays a crucial role in employment opportunities, employment procedures and future employment possibilities.** The willingness of entrepreneurs to take on migrant employees and their reasons for doing so are of great importance. In Poznań, many migrants struggle with difficulties on the labor market, facing three main barriers as they look for jobs:

1. **Legal status and the laws that govern it.** This issue is inextricably linked with the situation of migrants on the labor market. Incomprehensible procedures to legalize and extend a stay often prevent migrants from finding employment or being able to extend or alter existing contracts (in the case of those who have already found work).

2. **Lack of knowledge of the laws governing migrant employment in Poland.** Many migrants who arrive in Poland do not know enough about this subject. As a result, they do not know whether they can take up employment in a particular sector, position or work-time bracket. This situation can cause migrants to become disillusioned. Worse, a lack of knowledge about regulations can also facilitate the exploitation of foreign workers, forcing them to work illegally or in poor conditions.
3. **Lack of knowledge of the Polish language.** A lack of language skills is another obstacle to becoming employed and is closely related to the situation on the local labor market. In Poznań, almost all job offers on popular web portals (e.g. olx, gumtree, pracuj.pl) are published in Polish only. It is worth mentioning that unemployed migrants with a regulated status are entitled to register with the District Labor Office and take advantage of its employment and training offerings. Here again, however, information about the jobs and courses available is mostly in Polish. There are naturally also international corporations and large local companies that do hire highly qualified professionals from abroad who have no command of Polish, but such cases are much less common.

Due to these obstacles, many migrants in Poznań take on low-paid jobs that are below their qualifications, e.g. sorting clothes, working in warehouses or working in the catering/restaurant industry, earning very low wages as a result. This forces them to work long hours, leaving them no time or opportunity to look for a better job, learn Polish or get to know people outside the workplace. Some cases of exploitation of migrants working without work permits or contracts have also been reported. In such cases, migrants often refrain from reporting such abuse as they are afraid of the possible legal consequences (e.g. losing their residence permits).

### Institutional support

In 2013, 56 unemployed migrants (of whom 22 were women) were registered with the District Labor Office in Poznań. By 2014, the number had grown to 77 persons (of whom 30 were women). The biggest group were Ukrainians, who accounted for 25% and 19% respectively. This data is valid for the Poznań District. Registered migrants can take advantage of all forms of support that are offered by local government offices, among others, including an entitlement to unemployment benefit (for those who qualify), participation in internships, training courses and funding to start their own businesses. A measure of assistance is also provided to help migrants look for a job.

Migrants registered as unemployed at the District Employment Office are provided with:

- job placement services (if they are unemployed);
- professional job advice;
- courses on effective ways to look for work;
- a wide range of training courses.



Participants of different training courses in Poznań

Unemployment benefit in Poland is low and access to it is limited. To be able to earn a living, the majority of migrants are therefore willing to take on any job. Only a few can rely on support from their (Polish) families and/or register as unemployed. Individuals who apply for legalization of their stay are required to prove that they have a stable source of income sufficient to cover their cost of living without the need for social welfare support.

### Informal support

Migrants often try to overcome the different obstacles they face on the labor market by themselves. The following significant examples of informal support nevertheless exist:

1. **Networking**, which is an important aspect of self-organizing and mutual support. Ethnic, religious or class-based communities, formalized to a greater or lesser extent, often lay the basis for functioning networks in the host country. Compatriots who already live in Poland often support new arrivals on the labor market and help them in their dealings with local government.
2. **Institutions that support and offer job placement services to migrants.** Poznań has several employment agencies that specialize in providing jobs for migrants, e.g. Ukrainians. Such firms organize migrants' entire trip to and stay in Poland, including legalization of the stay. Most of the jobs they offer are in the second-hand business (for women) and in the construction sector (for men).
3. **Support from third parties.** For migrants, having a relationship with a Polish citizen or having Polish friends is an invaluable source of support from the very beginning. A network of contacts with people who know the local context and the realities of the labor market enables faster economic integration. In Poznań, a considerable degree of mobilization and self-organization is observable among migrants who are looking for a job.
4. **Facebook and social web portals** that serve migrants to organize coordination meetings for people who are searching for a job. Their aim is to put job-seeking migrants in touch with potential employers. Sometimes, they also post job offers for which a knowledge of Polish is not essential. The number of social media groups for migrants and websites that post job offers in English is growing.

## Recommendations

1. The rules and regulations that govern migrants' access to the Polish labor market are transparent. However, if foreign nationals, employment agencies and employers have no access to this knowledge, this has little real impact. It is therefore very important **to inform both foreign nationals and employers about the laws that govern the labor market and the opportunities available on it.** This information should be available in several languages.
2. There is a need to provide **advice to employers on the regulations that govern the employment of migrants.** Training should also be provided to migrants who are willing to familiarize themselves with the socio-cultural peculiarities of Poznań's labor. Migrants too need to know the rules and regulations that affect their employment prospects.
3. Employees at the various local government offices should be prepared for contact with migrants. Every institution should have several staff who are able to supply basic information in several languages. **Multicultural training could help prepare local government officials for contact with potential migrants from different countries.**

These important factors are instrumental in shaping the extent to which migrants can participate in the official economy. It is therefore vital to establish good practices on the local labor market and improve the economic situation of the growing number of migrants in Poznań.



AMIGA participants in Munich are gathering information about job-seeking

## **Poznań: International university graduates and students**

*Karolina Sydow*

### **International students in Poland**

In the period from 2001 to 2014, the number of foreign nationals studying at Polish universities grew by a factor of six, reaching a total of 35,983 in 2014 (reflecting year-on-year growth of 23%). In 2014, international students constituted 2.32% of all students in Poland.

This trend is the result not only of an increase in the absolute number of international students, but also of a decline in the number of students overall. In the academic year 2013/14, 125,000 fewer people studied in Poland than in the previous year. The majority of international students came from Ukraine. More and more often, it is being claimed that Polish institutes of higher education are experiencing a process of 'ukrainization', as Ukrainians account for 42% of the total number of international students in Poland. The next-largest groups are Belarussians, Norwegians, Spaniards and Swedes. Over 80% of international students come to Poland from other European countries.

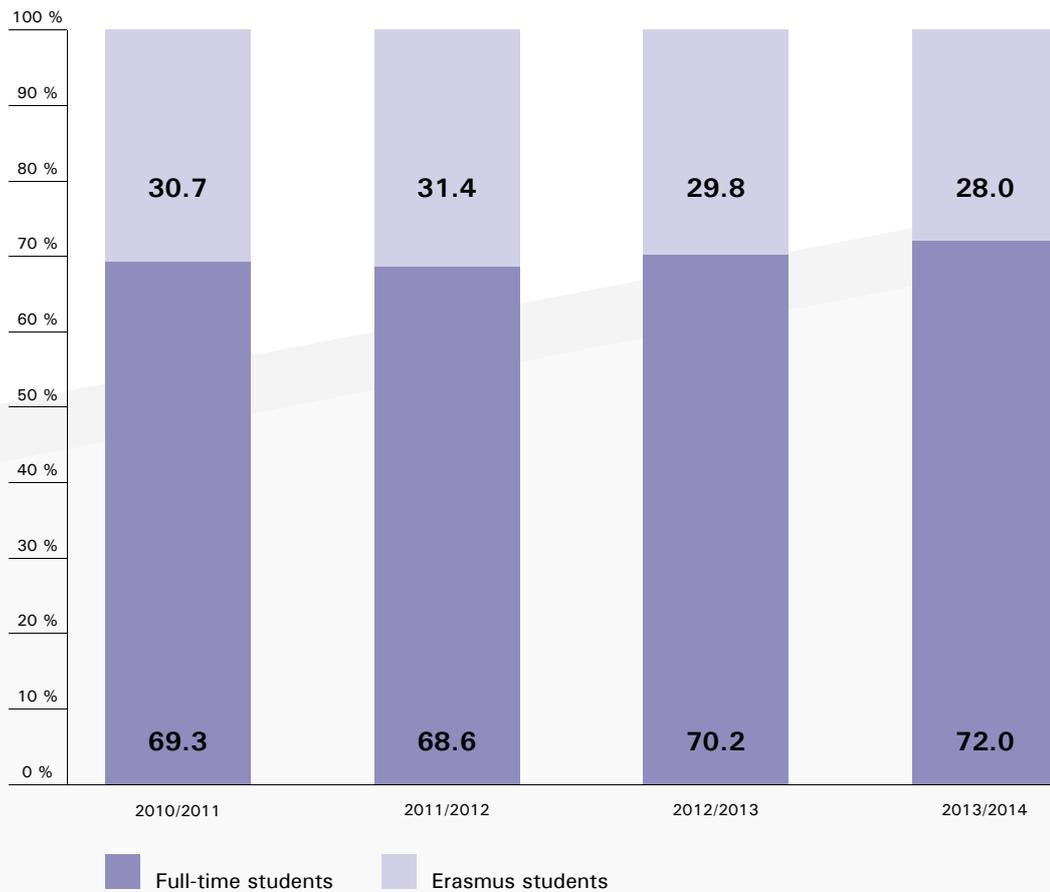
### **International students in Poznań**

From 2001/2002 to 2013/2014, Poznań's universities have witnessed similarly constant growth in the number of international students. In the academic year 2013/2014, 2,763 international students (full-time and Erasmus students) were enrolled to study here, equivalent to 9.4% of all foreign nationals studying in Poland. It is reasonable to expect a continued steady inflow of migrants wishing to study at Poznań universities in the years ahead. It is estimated that, by 2020, Poznań will host between 9,000 and 10,000 international students (Gajda 2015).

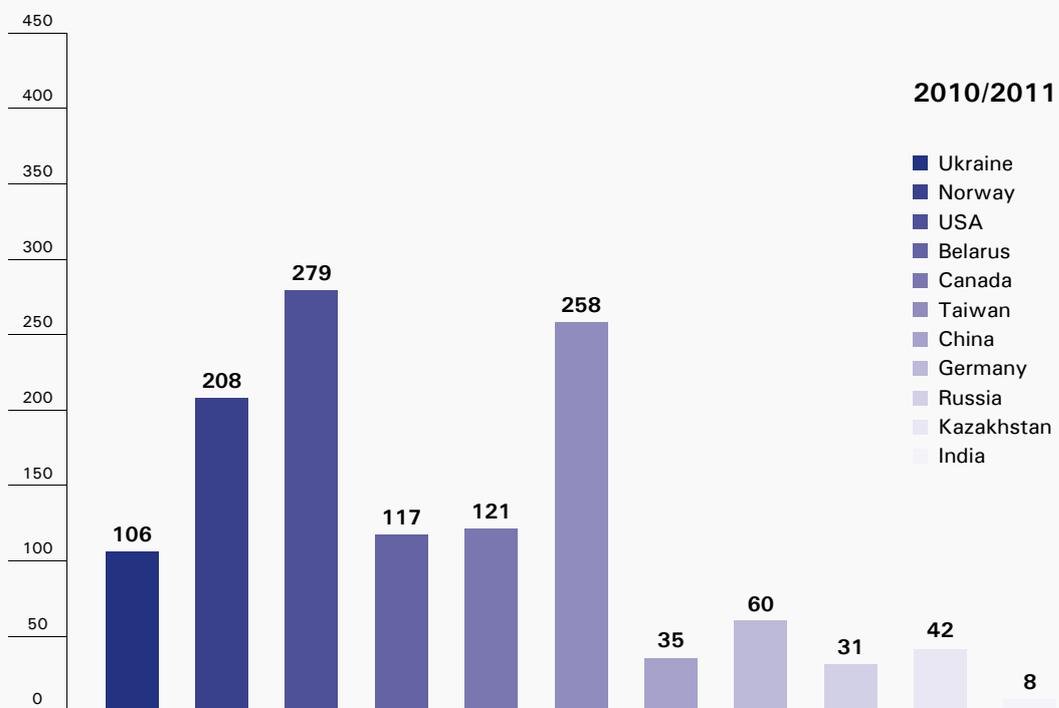
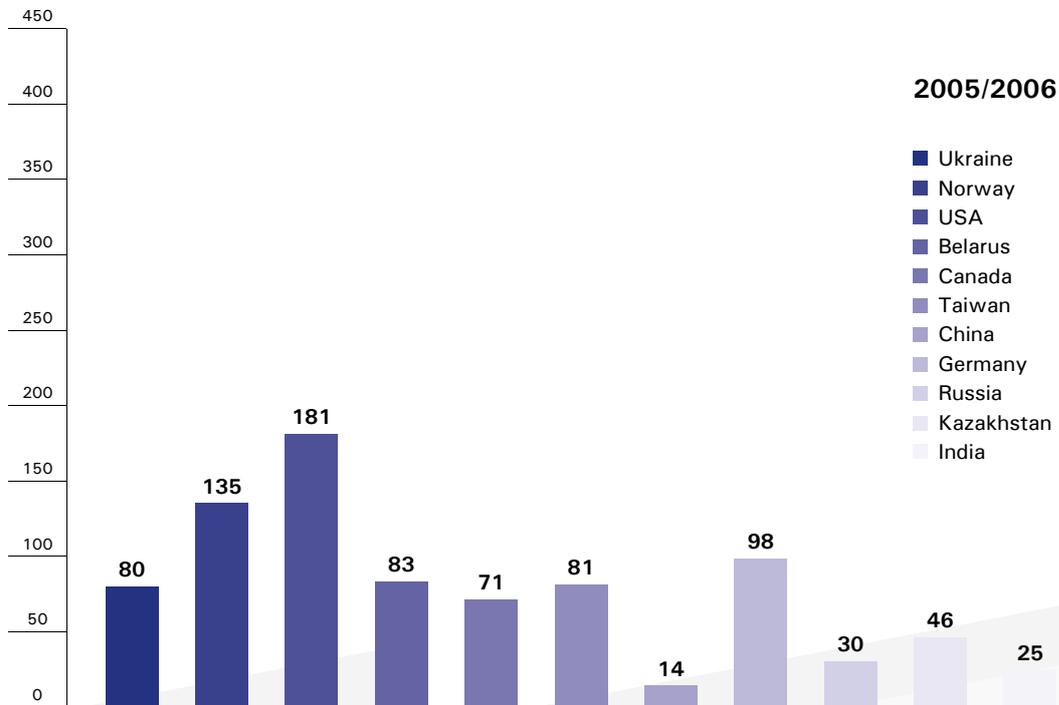
International students make up about half of the migrant population living in Poznań, and the majority of them are full-time students. Among full-time students, the largest national groups come from Ukraine, Norway, USA, Belarus and Canada. Of

those students who have come to Poland within the framework of the Erasmus exchange program, the largest groups comprise students from Spain, Turkey and Germany. The fastest growth in student numbers is observable among students from Arab countries.

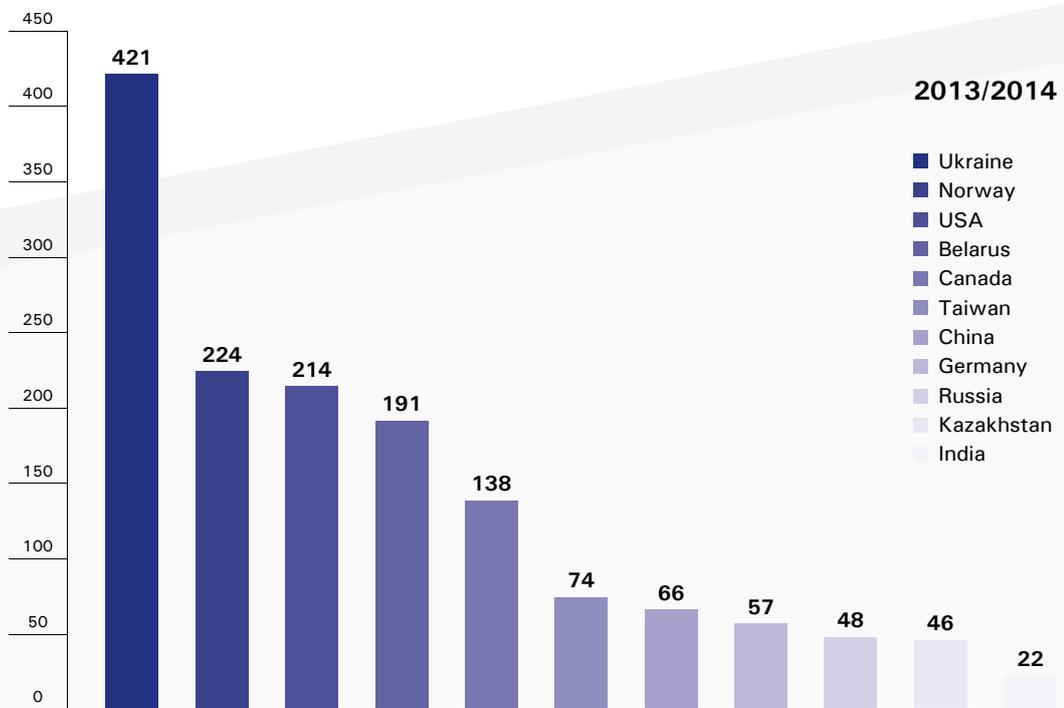
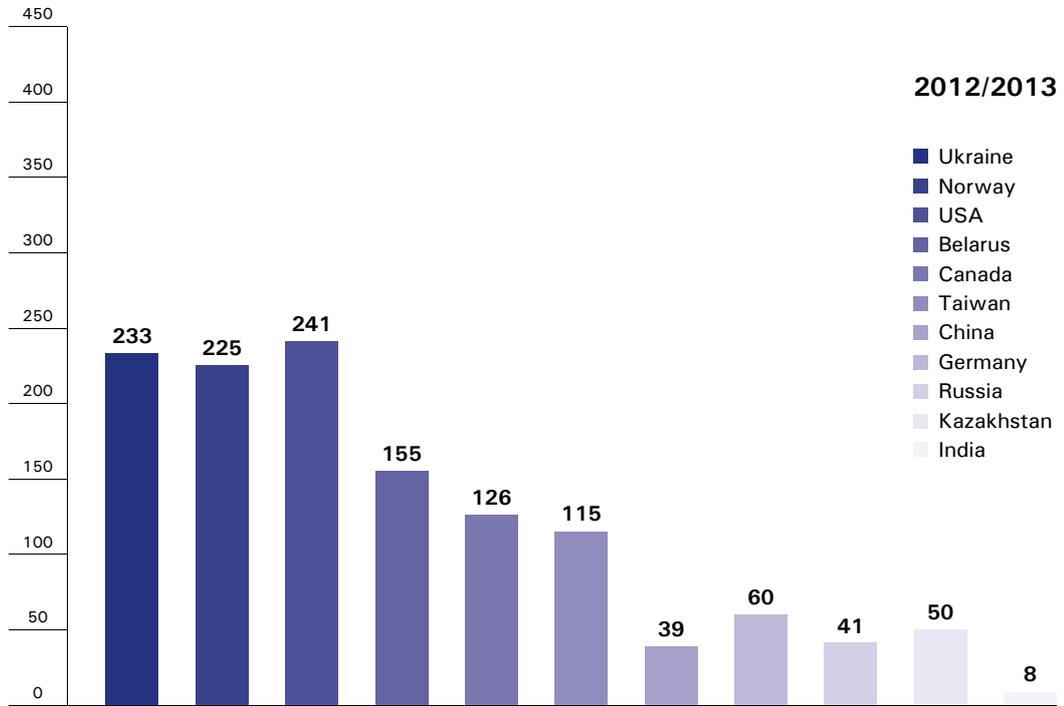
**Motivation: Why Poland and why Poznań?** According to the results of a survey conducted at Poznań’s universities in the course of the AMIGA project, the most important factors that influenced foreign nationals’ decision to study in Poznań were the “high quality of education” and the strictly economic consideration that the “cost of studying is lower here than in other countries”. Other important factors are that the cost of living in Poznań is relatively low and that the city is known to have a large number of students, a “vibrant academic community” and a wide range of international exchange programs.



**Figure 2: Breakdown of full-time students and Erasmus students at Poznań universities between 2010/2011 and 2013/2014**  
 Source: Prepared by Hanna Gajda on the basis of data from the City Development Department in Poznań



**Figure 3a: Change in the number of international students at Poznań universities between 2005/2006 and 2010/2011, by country of origin**  
 Source: Prepared by Hanna Gajda on the basis of data from the City Development Department in Poznań



**Figure 3 b: Change in the number of international students at Poznań universities between 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, by country of origin**  
 Source: Prepared by Hanna Gajda on the basis of data from the City Development Department in Poznań



Target group international graduates and students



Giving information about AMIGA offers in Munich

Migrants also cited the general accessibility of Polish universities as a further significant consideration. Only students of social sciences and the humanities and those of Polish origin (with a large overlap between these two groups) indicated the importance of a prior knowledge of Poland and the Polish language. The main sources of information about opportunities to take up studies in Poznań and at a given university turned out to be the universities' websites and contact with friends.

**Plans: To stay or to leave Poland and Poznań after graduating from university?** The findings of research carried out as part of the AMIGA project and other projects show that international students would be more likely to stay in Poland after graduating from university if they had better prospects of finding a good job and developing their professional career. Simpler procedures that make it easier for students to legalize their stay and find employment would also be helpful.

Students who graduated in social sciences and the humanities have so far stayed in Poland much more often than other groups. People studying the sciences showed little interest in staying in Poznań, and almost no students of medicine wanted to do so.

**Response by Poznań and its universities.** Universities in Poznań recognize the need to attract students from abroad. There can be no doubt that their policy of bringing in revenue is crucial in this regard. It should be noted that this policy is a grass-roots-level initiative operated by particular universities to try to attract students from abroad. By contrast, at the level of local (and indeed national) government, there is no coherent and consistent plan to encourage people from abroad to come and study in Poland.

**With regard to the promotion of Poland, Poznań and Poznań's universities,** one important element is the cooperation that, in recent years, has been emerging between the local authorities and certain universities. Care must nevertheless be taken to prevent this cooperation from being nothing more than promotion: When they invite foreign nationals, the city and the universities should also take responsibility for their situation when they arrive in Poznań.

**Better preparation of universities to welcome foreign nationals seems to be an urgent need.** International students clearly state that studying in Poznań would be more attractive if universities were better prepared to meet their needs and if administrative aspects of the services provided were improved. Students need more support not only with regard to their study curriculum, but also on matters relating to the legalization of their stay, finding accommodation, insurance and other practicalities of daily life.

**Improving the availability of Polish language courses** for students likewise appears very important. Basic Polish language courses should be obligatory both for students who are studying within the Polish system and for those who are studying courses taught in English. At present, not all universities offer such language courses; and even those courses that are offered are not always adequate. For instance, some courses involve only one lesson a week. Others solely target MA students or begin in the summer semester, giving winter semester students no opportunity to learn the language. Summer schools organized before the beginning of the academic year would seem to be a good idea, as they would enable students to learn Polish language and familiarize themselves with their new surroundings at the same time.

For foreign nationals, other important aspects include the legal issues involved in gaining access to the labor market during their studies and opportunities to stay in Poland after graduation. Greater flexibility in this respect would probably give significant encouragement to prospective students from abroad. The most recent amendments to Polish law (implemented in May 2014) partially go some way toward meeting these expectations, making life easier for students and graduates on a number of counts. Examples include extending the validity period for temporary residence permits during studies and enabling graduates to apply for temporary one-year residence permits to give them time to look for a job.

From the perspective of students, it is very important that people who work at universities have a knowledge of the regulations that allow them to legalize their stay and their work. There should also be one specific place where students can go to obtain information on these issues, without having to go from one authority to the other. At the same time, university staff should be trained in dealing with these questions and thus enabled to give students unhindered access to clearly formulated information.

**The labor market is a crucial factor influencing international students' decision about staying in Poland and in Poznań.** People who have decided to leave Poland after graduating from university primarily cite better prospects in another country (be it their country of origin or another migration country) and the inability to find a satisfactory job in Poland as their reasons for leaving. For students, one valuable source of information would be a database providing information on employers who offering internships and job.

**The AMIGA project undertook a range of activities designed to address the needs of students and graduates:**

- providing information and advice at the MIP and in the context of street work;
- promoting AMIGA's offerings among students: participating in special Orientation Days organized by universities, forwarding information about forthcoming events to university staff and, via their agency, passing it on to students;
- posting legal and administrative information that is of use to the 'average' student on the MIP's website (i.e. information not only in Polish language, but also in English and Russian);
- offering Polish language courses, providing instruction on how to start a business, providing individual job advice and participating in university job fairs/job fairs organized by the university;
- building a network of contacts useful to migrants living in Poznań – including interpreters and doctors who can communicate in foreign languages – and posting this information on the MIP's website, as well as making it available to the universities;
- cultivating a base of potential employers;
- organizing meetings of groups of experts to discuss the current situation and challenges, define courses of action and necessary changes, and initiate these changes;
- conducting research by surveying the reasons why migrants begin to study in Poland and what they plan to do on finishing their studies; gathering information about the needs of migrants during their visits to the MIP and in the context of street work.

Most of the activities undertaken within the AMIGA project addressed the most important needs of international students. However, all these activities clearly require further development. Of great importance here is a commitment on the part not only of universities (grassroots level activities), but also of local government institutions.

## **Poznań: Migrant entrepreneurs**

*Robert Rydzewski*

### **Number of migrant businesses**

It is impossible to quote the exact number of migrants who run their own businesses in Poznań. According to the official data, about 4,000 migrants pay taxes in Poznań. Yet it is difficult to estimate how many of them run their own businesses, as Poland has no register that would provide reliable data revealing the scale of this phenomenon.

The problem of estimating the economic activity of migrants relates to several factors, one of which is the current legal system. Poland maintains two registers of entrepreneurs: the Central Registration and Information on Business (*Centralna Ewidencja i Informacja o Działalności Gospodarczej, CEIDG*), which contains a list of single-person firms and companies; and the National Country Register (*Krajowy Rejestr Sądowy, KRS*), where commercial law partnerships are registered. According to the CEIDG, about 700 single-person businesses are run by migrants in Poznań (data status: June 2013), whereas data in the KRS suggests that there are over 3,000 businesses backed by foreign capital. Given that more than 100,000 firms are registered in Poznań, the number of firms run by migrants is not high.

### **Types of migrant businesses**

Usually, migrant entrepreneurs set up businesses in the commerce and service sectors, in areas such as gastronomy and foreign language education, for example. While the latter is typical of migrants from Western Europe and the USA, the former is more common for migrants from the former Soviet Union – widely referred to as ‘bazaar tourists’, who arrived in the 1990s in the wake of transformation and traded at bazaars all over Poland. Over time and as a result of state service controls, they were forced to legalize their stay and economic activity. The gradual disappearance of bazaars also eroded the significance of this type of economic activity.

Migrants can legalize their economic activity in one of two distinct ways. The first is as a commercial law partnership, which does not require a residence permit. The second is as a single-person business (self-employment) without hiring waged workers. It should be stressed that, in some cases, self-employment occurs as a result of corporate cost-cutting policies and is a way of shifting responsibility from the management to the employees. This trend has been present in Poland for many years and applies to Polish and foreign citizens alike. Yet self-employment is also a way of finding one’s place on the labor market. In general, Polish companies are very reluctant to hire foreigners. It should be noted that firms are very often registered in the name of Polish citizens even when, in reality, they are run by migrants. This happens mainly because of different restrictions on the launch of a new business by migrants.



Meeting of scientific steering committee, Munich



Participants of one of the AMIGA seminars in Munich

As research presented in the book *'Migracje a Heterogeniczność Kulturowa'* (CeBaM 2012) has shown, certain trends can be observed among migrants who set up a business. Turkish migrants often run restaurants and fast food bars offering menus associated with Middle Eastern cuisine. In the case of Poznań, however, it is still too early to speak of migrant entrepreneurs filling ethnic niches as is happening in Warsaw, for example. Having said that, the possibility that such niches may emerge in future cannot be ruled out. Today, it is difficult to identify any other particular business activity that would be occupied by migrants coming from one specific country.

This is probably due to the small number of migrants in Poland and their diversified ethnic backgrounds. Some changes have taken place, however: In the past, Polish citizens traded with exotic commodities, while migrants traded with goods bought in Polish wholesale stores. Today, migrants are more and more willingly setting up businesses that relate to their country of origin – importing goods from their home country, for instance, or organizing trips to it.

## Challenges faced by migrant entrepreneurs

It is nevertheless difficult to assess how long migrant entrepreneurs are able to survive on the labor market. According to official statistics, about 30% of firms cease to exist within about one year, while 75% are no longer in business after three years. Unfortunately, in the case of migrants, the corresponding statistics look even worse. To meet the needs of migrant entrepreneurs, it is therefore crucial to take a closer look at the obstacles they encounter. Migrants who want to run their own business in Poland not only face the same problems as their Polish peers, but must also overcome difficulties stemming from the mere fact of being from another country. Irrespective of their country of origin, the biggest challenges that entrepreneurs in Poland have to tackle are as follows:

- the tax system (including the submitting of accounts to the tax office and social insurance institutions);
- difficulties obtaining funds to start and develop their business (non-returnable loans are most commonly given to people who experience difficulties on the labor market, i.e. the disabled and the unemployed; people who do not qualify for priority groups have difficulties obtaining any support);

- problems surviving on the labor market (particularly in the early years of running a business, but also in later periods) and problems attracting customers (due to strong competition and a heavily saturated market).

Another major problem faced by new entrepreneurs is the lack of a solid business plan. Many are not aware that a well-thought-out business plan could help them avoid problems in the initial phase of running a business. Apart from the problems all novice businessmen have to struggle with, migrants – simply because they are migrants – also have to deal with the major difficulty of obtaining a residence permit, as this is a necessary condition to be allowed to start a business.

## Solutions

One solution to the problem with business planning could be for business incubators to develop an enterprise under a chosen name without having to register a firm and, hence, without the need for a permit to run the business. This kind of economic activity is run under a tax identification number and the given incubator's entry in the Register of the National Economy. In practice, however, incubators are reluctant to accept migrants, and those incubators that play an active role lack free capacity. Another challenge is the language barrier. Unfortunately, Polish is still the only language of communication in the majority of local government offices, a situation which forces migrants to use the help of Polish friends or interpreters. Migrants often have problems obtaining the information they need to register and run a business, which is crucial given the rather complicated legal requirements. In many cases, migrants do not know where they can get complex information in languages other than Polish. Another important limitation is a lack of access to EU subsidies or other forms of support that are available to Polish citizens.

The situation of migrant entrepreneurs who operate on the Polish market could be improved in two ways. First, things should, within the confines of law, be made easier and more assistance should be provided at institutional level. Examples include establishing an information point where foreigners who are keen to start a business can obtain complex information, additional training for the employees of local government offices and relevant institutions, and hiring new personnel who can communicate at least in English. An alternative to such a solution would be to deploy a group of assistants with a command of several languages who could support migrants during visits in situations where the language barrier constitutes a serious obstacle. Providing professional advisory services in English and organizing meetings with tax and advertising experts, also in English, is also strongly recommended.

Second, certain changes should be made to the prevailing legislation. Liberalizing immigration law and lifting restrictions that make it difficult for migrants to set up a business would enable migrants to play a more active role in the Polish economy. At the same time, the illegal practice of 'planting' Polish citizens as the owners

of businesses that are in fact owned by foreigners, then would disappear. More financial support and the availability of EU funds to migrants would likewise help to make their businesses more competitive.

## **Munich: Background situation**

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz*

Labor market experts and trade associations have for years been warning of an impending shortage of qualified labor in Germany. Some industries and regions are already unable to fully satisfy their own demand for suitably qualified labor. The Institute for Employment Research (IAB, the research institute of the Federal Employment Agency) has produced a remarkable calculation: Excluding migration and given a constant labor force participation rate, Germany's potential labor force (PLF) will shrink from nearly 45 million people today to just under 27 million people in 2050. The decline will accelerate in particular in the years after 2020. Between now and 2020, the potential labor force will shrink by 3.6 million to 41 million people. A further 6.5 million people will then disappear from the PLF by 2025, leaving just 38.1 million. Forecasts from other institutions likewise expect the shortage of qualified labor to become much more acute. According to one study commissioned by Bavarian industry association Vereinigung der Bayerischen Wirtschaft (vbw) and conducted by the Prognos research institute, a "qualified labor shortfall" of 5.2 million people – including 2.4 million academics – is expected by 2030. This shortage, the study says, is making itself felt above all in Bavaria, which already accounts for around 520,000 of the three million qualified workers that Germany lacks in 2015. By 2030, Germany will lack five million qualified workers, with 1.1 million of them needed in the Bavarian economy (Vereinigung der Bayerischen Wirtschaft 2011).

The situation on the Munich labor market mirrors the development at national level. According to IHK-Fachkräftemonitor Bayern (a forecasting tool used by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria to predict the supply and demand of qualified labor), the Munich region will, as an annual average, be short of a good 60,000 qualified workers by 2020. In 2030, 97,000 vacancies for qualified workers are likely to remain unfilled. In the years ahead, the relative shortfall will be worst among academics. As of 2020, the shortage of people with commercial qualifications will also increase. Not even relatively high inward migration figures will offset the forecast shortage of qualified labor – in part because some migrants will leave Germany and Munich again, or because they will have a different level of qualifications.

"Data from the Federal Statistical Office shows that the number of foreign nationals in Germany rose by 5.8%, or 419,900 people, to 7.6 million in 2013. EU member states accounted for 75% of this increase. In absolute terms, the ten countries that acceded to the EU in 2004 contributed the largest share, with Poland and Hungary leading the way. An increase in migration from Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia, which only joined in 2007 and 2012 respectively, was also noted, as was a slightly smaller rise in inward migration from Spain, Greece and Italy, the Mediterranean countries hit hardest by the euro crisis. Foreign nationals currently make up 9.4% of the German population. The percentage in large German cities is considerably higher in most cases." (City of Munich, Department of Labor and Economic Development 2014, p. 53f).



Members from AMIGA project Munich

At year-end 2013, 25.4% of Munich's population were foreign nationals, while 39.7% of the total population have a migration background (Munich Office of Statistics). For definitions of the terms "migration background" and "foreign nationals" used in this description of the situation in Munich, please refer to the Appendix 3. Romanian and Polish nationals constitute the largest groups of new migrants. Turkish, Greek and Croatian nationals make up the largest individual groups of residents with a migration background (City of Munich, Social Services Department, the Office for Intercultural Affairs 2013, p. 37).

## **Munich: Qualified migrants with job placement challenges**

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz*

Statistically, the group made up of qualified migrants with job placement challenges in Munich can be described as follows: Year on year, the number of foreign nationals in socially insured employment rose by an above-average rate of 8.4% between 2012 and 2013. This growth took place both in the secondary sector (mainly in the construction industry) and in the tertiary or service sector (primarily in freelance, scientific and technical services, information and communication, transportation and storage services) (all data from the City of Munich, Department of Labor and Economic Development 2014, p. 54).

In mid-year 2013, foreign nationals accounted for 28.5% of low-paid jobs (41,681 people of foreign nationality in marginal employment). This figure was equivalent to a year-on-year increase of 3.7%. Increases were recorded both for individuals exclusively in marginal employment (+ 2.6%) and for individuals for whom marginal employment is a sideline to their main job (+ 4.7%). "By comparison, the increase in all instances of marginal employment in Munich stood at 1.7% in the same period. For the Munich economy as a whole, the proportion of individuals exclusively in marginal employment rose by 0.7%, while the proportion of marginal sideline jobs was up by 2.9%" (all data from the City of Munich, Department of Labor and Economic Development 2014, p. 54).

Although the number of foreign nationals in socially insured employment increased in 2013, the statistics also indicate a rise in unemployment among this group. In 2013, the jobless rate among foreign residents under the jurisdiction of the Munich Employment Agency increased year on year to 8.9%. Foreign nationals' share of total unemployment rose to 39.8% in 2013, one percentage point higher than in 2012. This reflects an above-average increase in unemployment in this group in 2013 (City of Munich, Department of Labor and Economic Development 2014, p. 56). One possible cause of this apparent contradiction can be seen in the overall increase in inward migration.

It is not possible to analyze whether foreign nationals have taken up employment in keeping with their qualifications, as this data is not recorded. Notwithstanding, given the very substantial demand witnessed among participants in the AMIGA project and the qualitative AMIGA study (see our discussion of the expert groups and the empirical study in chapter 4), the subjective impression among the AMIGA team is that there is a significant discrepancy between foreign nationals' qualifications and the positions they occupy on the labor market.

Helping (highly) qualified migrants gain access to the labor market is an important objective of the Munich Employment and Qualification Program (MBQ) run by the Department of Labor and Economic Development (RAW). This is because, despite positive overall development on the local labor market, inequalities exist in terms of both access to the labor market and career development in existing employment situations.

By consequence, activities are being developed and implemented in a number of programs to help migrants become integrated in the labor market. In addition to local government programs, regional and national activities such as ratification of the Federal Recognition Act (to recognize qualifications acquired abroad) are also taking effect. The simplification of immigration and labor laws and the introduction of the Blue Card for qualified foreign nationals are other examples.

According to the latest report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Germany is one of the industrialized nations with the lowest barriers to the inward migration of labor with academic qualifications (OECD 2013). Implementation of the directive on highly qualified employment, effective August 1, 2012, led to the inclusion of a total of 15 new purposes of residence in Germany's Residence Act. The aim of this amendment was to make it easier and more attractive for qualified foreign nationals to gain access to the German labor market. In spite of the low barriers, however, comparatively few highly qualified individuals come to Germany from countries outside Europe. To date, only every 40th inward migrant has been a qualified worker or manager from what are known as third countries. The OECD researchers note that the German immigration system is still perceived, both at home and abroad, as restrictive and inaccessible.

Statements made by the Federal Employment Agency indicate that resolute action is needed if Germany is not in future to suffer a significant shortage of the qualified labor that drives growth and prosperity (Federal Employment Agency 2011, p. 3). However, qualified labor potential can be tapped only if all labor market players adopt an active role. The report by the Federal Employment Agency referred to above sees specific action to manage the migration of qualified labor as one of the most important instruments to sustainably meet existing demand for qualified labor resources. Both by selectively recruiting qualified labor from abroad and by activating and integrating the hitherto neglected potential of highly qualified migrants who are already here, Germany should position itself in the perception of foreign nationals as an attractive migration country.

As the City of Munich's Intercultural Integration Report 2013 explains, Germany has amended a number of laws in order to safeguard its pool of qualified labor and mobilize the potential of migrants. These amendments, the report says, have triggered a fundamental reform: "When the Federal Law on Determining the Equivalence of Professional Qualifications (BGFQ) came into force in 2012, it was followed on August 1, 2013, by the Bavarian Law on Determining the Equivalence of Professional Qualifications (BayBQFG). [...] 18 regulated occupations are now governed by state law. This means that, for the first time, occupational categories such as child educators, social educators and preschool teachers also have access to recognition proceedings." (City of Munich, Social Services Department, the Office for Intercultural Affairs 2013, p. 55f). The introduction of new recognition laws, changes to labor migration law, including the EU's new Blue Card ruling (in force since August 1, 2012), and the Ordinance on the Employment of Foreign Nationals (*Beschäftigungsverordnung*, BeschV, new version dated July 1, 2013), have eased

the conditions governing migration from third countries. At the same time, crisis-driven migration from southern Europe has added to the rise in inward migration.

In its International Migration Outlook 2014, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) notes that Germany is now one of the OECD countries with the least restrictions on the employment-related migration of highly qualified labor. At the same time, it adds that many procedures – including some of those that have been newly introduced – are still seen as bureaucratic and opaque. For example, the granting of a residence permit under the EU's Blue Card arrangement and pursuant to the amended Employment Ordinance presupposes the recognition of a qualification acquired abroad.

Although new migrants have a higher level of education and qualifications than the average German citizen (Seibert, Wapler 2012), having the qualifications they obtained abroad recognized in Germany is a challenge for these new arrivals. The system of recognition is rooted in a broad spectrum of laws, ordinances and rulings. There are nearly 1,000 reference occupations to which qualifications obtained abroad can be assigned. There is also a plethora of authorities and higher-level ministries at national and regional level that are responsible for granting recognition. As a result, qualified migrants require a lot of advice on the topic. In Munich, the Service Center for the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications at the Social Services Department and the Service Center for International Professionals at the Foreigners Office therefore share this work in order to nurture a more welcoming culture. Vigorous demand for advice on recognition reflects the high inward migration figures (City of Munich, Social Services Department, the Office for Intercultural Affairs 2013, p. 55f).

In the AMIGA project, the group consisting of migrants with job placement challenges was very heterogeneous. Participants in this group can be described as follows:

- In possession or not in possession of German nationality
- Migrants from EU and non-EU countries
- Aged between 24 and 55 years
- With and without recognized qualifications obtained abroad
- Engaged in socially insured employment below their qualifications, looking for a job, self-employed or keen to start a business
- With German language skills ranging from very good to non-existent
- Inquiries already submitted from abroad, very recent arrivals in Munich and individuals resident in Munich for a number of years

## **Munich: International university graduates and students**

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz*

Academic education in Germany is very popular. Professor Maria Böhmer, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, recently noted that Germany is now the second most popular migration country, after the USA. This fact, she said, is confirmed by the current record number of 300,000 international students enrolled at German universities (DAAD, press release dated November 13, 2014).

Consciously targeting this group and encouraging them to make their stay in Munich permanent appears to be an efficient and sensible way to safeguard the pool of qualified labor. Foreign students and successful foreign graduates from Munich's universities constitute a considerable potential resource from which to meet demand for qualified labor – a resource that has received too little attention hitherto. These individuals are young, have obtained good qualifications in the German education system and are already familiar with the country, its people and its customs. More than 17,600 foreign students were enrolled at universities in Munich for the winter semester 2013/2014 (City of Munich 2015). The Bavarian capital's 15.8% share of foreign students is higher than the national average of 12% (Federal Statistical Office 2015).

In implementing the directive on highly qualified labor with effect from August 1, 2012, the legislator made a number of changes to aliens law that are designed to make Germany more attractive in the race to attract top talents. The new residence permit gives international students easier access to the German labor market; and the option of more quickly making residence permanent, coupled with greater employment mobility within Europe pursuant to § 19a of the German Residence Act (*Aufenthaltsgesetz*, *AufenthG*), makes it very attractive. "The fact that the application procedure does not require applicants to leave the country shows that, in Germany, it is regularly possible to migrate via universities." (Hanganu 2015, p. 7). This is because the new legislation improves foreign students' ability to take up gainful employment after completing their studies at a German university.

For non-EU nationals who successfully complete their studies in Germany, § 16 Para. 4 *AufenthG* allows residence permits to be extended for up to 18 months after graduation. This gives migrants the chance to look for jobs in keeping with their academic level. To extend their residence permits in order to look for a job, individuals must furnish evidence that they can cover their cost of living. For most foreign university graduates, this means that they have to engage in gainful employment during their search. If they find a suitable job during this period, they can stay in Germany and their existing residence permit can be converted to a residence permit for the purpose of employment (§ 18 *AufenthG*). Since August 1, 2012, it has no longer been necessary to obtain the consent of the Federal Employment Agency before granting this residence permit (§ 2 Ordinance on Employment, current version). One necessary condition, however, remains that the job must be in keeping with the qualification (e.g. bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree) obtained.

Data on the number of international graduates who remain in Germany after completing their study appears inconsistent. According to an OECD study (based on data from 2008), roughly every fourth international student stays in Germany after graduation, either as a migrant worker or for family reasons. "Overall, residence permits for the purpose of employment were issued to 30% of international graduates from German universities in 2010, up from 23% in 2008." (OECD 2013, p. 150).

In OECD countries, however, both the university landscape, migration patterns and the corresponding legal framework have changed since 2008. As Hanganu (2015) points out, the stay-on rates quoted in the OECD study to permit the comparison of multiple target countries were calculated as status-switch rates. "The rate was thus defined as the percentage of international students moving from a student status to another residence status. They are juxtaposed with former students who, in the same year, did not extend their study residence permit and were not granted a new one. The calculation makes no provision either for individuals who initially applied for a residence permit but were not granted a new permit, or for individuals who already had a permanent residence permit. It is therefore reasonable to assume that, in most countries, the calculated rate was smaller than the actual percentage of former international students who remained in the country where they had studied." (Hanganu 2015, p. 4).

In more recent discussions of the stay-on rate, Hanganu (2015) refers to the Central Register of Foreign Nationals (*Ausländerzentralregister*, AZR), an official source of data on migration and on foreign nationals who live in Germany. This register continuously records how many third-country nationals and EU citizens are officially domiciled in Germany. For third-country nationals, it also records residence permit details and, in some cases, their purpose of residence. According to Hanganu, residence permits granted under the immigration laws in place since 2005 can be traced for the past ten years due to the historic records of residence permits stored in the register (§18 Para. 4 of the Ordinance on Implementation of the Central Register of Foreign Nationals Act (AZRG-DV); Hanganu 2015, p. 2).

Analysis of the register within the framework of a 2013 study of graduates commissioned by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and updated analyses at the end of 2014 show that a little over half of all third-country graduates from German universities extend their stay in Germany (Hanganu 2015, p. 2). "Based on the Central Register of Foreign Nationals, analysis of all third-country nationals who studied in Germany between January 2005 and October 2013 shows that 54.1% of former students were still living in Germany in October 2014. These roughly 99,700 individuals have changed their residence status or applied for a residence permit in Germany, while around 84,600 individuals (45.9% of former students) have left Germany. Of those who remained in Germany, about 6,800 were looking for work and 26,700 were in gainful employment with corresponding residence permits in October 2014. 33,500 individuals were granted residence permits for family reasons; these permits also entitle the holder to take up gainful employment. 10,500 individuals were in possession of permanent residence permits,



**MigMent mentoring program: Opens up new professional contacts and facilitates networking**

while 1,200 held other residence permits. In the case of a further 19,300 individuals, for whom the status “application for residence permit submitted” was flagged in the register, it is not clear whether and with what form of residence permit they will stay in Germany. Notwithstanding, the fact that they have submitted applications indicates an initial desire to stay.” (Hanganu 2015, p. 2).

To help international students in Germany to become generally more integrated in the labor market, the target group must be supplied with much more information about the legal framework for a transition to the labor market. In addition, more tailor-made services such as orientation courses and career advice must be offered to them. The German government likewise highlights the need to make better use of the potential afforded by foreign students. Its National Action Plan on Integration focuses on the issue of employment for citizens with a migration background. In its report on the “Labor market and gainful employment”, the government recommends that strategies be developed to encourage and persuade foreign graduates from German universities to take up work in Germany (Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs 2013).

Munich has no empirical or statistical data that would show how many foreign graduates from local universities go on to find employment in the Bavarian capital. Existing data material merely indicates the number of graduates from non-EU member states who are looking for work. In 2012, nearly 400 people (about 40% of all non-EU graduates) were granted a residence permit entitling them to look for a job. In order to stay in Munich, they have 18 months in which to find employment in keeping with their qualifications. It is not possible to make generally valid statements about how many non-EU graduates from Munich universities possess residence permits for the purpose of employment (§ 18 AufenthG), nor how many have already left the city again. Nor is any reliable data available about EU nationals who have graduated from Munich universities and then taken up employment.

Obstacles to continued residence upon completion of academic studies include complicated rules about taking up work, the inadequate communication of these rules, inadequate information and a lack of information, insufficient German language skills (especially where courses of study are delivered in English) and experience of discrimination. Although there are as yet no exact figures about how many

international graduates end up integrated in the Munich labor market, experts agree that a large proportion of the total of 17,600 foreign students will leave the city again when they have completed their studies. Under better and more welcoming conditions, however, these people would be available to the local labor market.

More international graduates from German universities will only be sustainably integrated in the labor market if the new legal provisions are implemented unbureaucratically and effectively. The decision taken by Munich City Council to establish a central organization and service unit for qualified migrants and migrants with management credentials at the Department of Public Order (*Kreisverwaltungsreferat*, KVR) is a first important step in this direction. The aim is to provide customer-oriented and high-quality advice relating to the implementation of the directive on highly qualified labor.

Like target group 1 (qualified migrants with job placement challenges), the international university graduates and students encountered in the AMIGA project were likewise a very heterogeneous group, including:

- EU nationals and non-EU nationals who are subject to different work and residence provisions
- students of “MINT” subjects and understaffed disciplines, alongside students of other courses
- students of courses taught in English and students with a good to very good command of German

## **Munich: Migrant entrepreneurs**

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz*

Business registration data in Munich says little about migrant companies as a group, as nationality is the only distinction that is drawn. Moreover, no data is gathered with regard to freelance self-employment. As a result, conclusions about the potential for start-ups, possible demand and any obstacles can be drawn only to a limited extent. National studies and analyses of business registration statistics show that migrants start their own business more often than German nationals do. This statement is also valid for the situation in Munich. According to Böhme and Wenzlaff (2012, p. 19), analysis of completed business registrations in Munich produces the following picture:

- More new businesses are being registered by foreign nationals and less by German nationals
- Every fourth new business registered by a migrant is started by a woman (by comparison, every third new business registered by a German is started by a woman)
- In 2011, around 40% of German and non-German entrepreneurs who registered a new business were aged between 35 and 49 years. The second-largest age group was the 25 to 34 year-old bracket, which accounted for 27% of Germans and 33% of foreign nationals who registered a new business
- People with the following nationalities start new businesses most frequently: Hungarian (17.8%), Romanian (16.8%) and Polish (15.4%)
- Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, Croatian, Austrian, Serbian and Turkish nationals also figure highly in the number of new business registrations
- More than a third (39%) of all 10,500 new businesses registered by non-German entrepreneurs in 2011 were in the construction industry

The migrant entrepreneur group is inhomogeneous. The experience of the AMIGA team and the findings of an empirical study conducted during the AMIGA project indicate at least two distinct reasons for starting a business: Some migrant entrepreneurs see starting their own business as a chance to move from unemployment toward integration in the labor market. On the other hand, other migrant entrepreneurs want to put their skills and qualifications to good use on the labor market; see also Evers & Jung (eds.) 2011, p. 43f.

## Summary of the situation of AMIGA target groups in Munich and Poznań

Andra Barboni/Izabella Main/Ulrike Schulz

The project target groups in Munich face a variety of obstacles and needs, the most obvious of which are difficulties with the language. While migrants often possess professional skills and technical knowledge, many only have a poor command of German. This hinders their search for jobs and puts them at a major disadvantage compared to German nationals competing for similar work. As a result, language difficulties may cause some migrants to become disillusioned about looking for employment in keeping with their qualifications. Instead, they effectively force themselves to be satisfied with their current (underqualified) activities, seeing the language barrier as an insurmountable obstacle.

*"It was at the beginning very difficult for me to prepare the application documents, in my home it's different (...) I need to be investing a lot of time, and the German language for me is still a challenge when I apply or have to imagine. I always had my friends to ask for support, I do not like and that is difficult for me to always ask for help. But luckily I have friends who help me who my documents so improved that these professional, look better, but at the beginning it was really hard to find the right offer and in the social sphere, it is particularly difficult because they not be offered under the usual exchanges. Thanks to my friends, I have learned over time, where, in which institutions I have to ask directly." (Psychologist from a non-EU country interviewed as part of the AMIGA study; see discussion of the study by Isabella Waibel in chapter 4)*

In Poznań, migrants supported within the project faced many challenges in their professional life, studies, social life and daily issues as a result of language problems. This was the one challenge that was mentioned most often. For many migrants, indeed, it was hard to get any job at all without speaking Polish. Most migrants therefore had to accept jobs below their qualifications, with very low salaries, long working hours and arduous working conditions (sorting second-hand clothing in a factory, for example). The lack of language skills was also a burden when seeking to resolve issues relating to legal residence in Poland. Migrants had problems filling out the forms, writing answers and talking to officials. There were also cases of other, more practical problems resulting from language barriers: finding a doctor, arranging education for migrant children, finding somewhere to live, resolving disagreements with landlords and communicating with neighbors. Students reported difficulties in organizing their daily life, finding the right training and even just trying to pass their exams. Some migrants were evidently accepted to study courses taught in Polish with no assessment of their language skills.

In Munich, the target groups are not full aware of what support services are available from local institutions. In some cases, this is because the advisory and support systems they know in their home countries are very different to those available in Munich. This can lead to migrants not even looking for certain services in Munich.

*"I think that we need more explanation about all the institutions of how everything works where you have to ask, how, how long it takes. Because it is also something that you do not know here, or I did not know that so everything should make in advance here a long time, for example, a recognition may take three to six months and if you want to work now, you can not really if you don't have this information."  
(Architect from South America interviewed as part of the AMIGA study)*

Migrants are very keen to get to know what services are available. It is therefore important for the various target groups to have these services closely interconnected, as this allows individuals seeking advice to be passed on to the "right" authority depending on their specific needs. The role of the Federal Employment Agency and the Department of Public Order (Kreisverwaltungsreferat, KVR), the first ports of call for migrants, should not be underestimated. In some cases, these were the only official contact points of which migrants were aware.

*"The immigration authority is the first contact point for migrants. And I think there is even more information to flow about the possibilities and all the organizations that are behind the migrants. Also with respect to start-ups and an establishment opportunity here in Munich. Because it helps but not just to get brochures, but also that the people who work at the immigration office, etc., are able to take this care or at least be referred to the proper authorities. Because you will find many information (...) but if you still have any specific questions, then you get either no response or a very vague answer."  
(Lawyer from Eastern Europe interviewed as part of the AMIGA study)*

In Poznań, the migrant population is much smaller than that in Munich. Accordingly, the support system available to migrants is still in its early days. The Migrant Info Point is the first and, at present, only place where migrants can go to receive a variety of free support services. There are almost no formal migrant organizations in Poznań, although foreign nationals living in Poznań have recently begun to organize themselves more actively via social media (Facebook). Even though information about Migrant Info Point and other offers was circulated to various local government and university offices, it became clear in the course of the project that most migrants heard about it only by the word of mouth. Promoting the project was an important and ongoing activity, yet many institutions and officials still had little or no knowledge of it.

Some project participants (including migrants with qualifications obtained in Germany) reported feeling that visa and labor law restrictions on skilled migrants from third countries put them at a disadvantage as they sought to develop their professional career. They see it as a form of exploitation if they are overlooked for promotion opportunities simply because their work permits are tied to specific jobs. In some cases, labor law restrictions on third-country nationals were also cited by participants as a reason why they were turned down. Many project participants worked in underqualified employment as they had to provide for themselves and their families. However, a lack of language skills, a lack of confidence and/or a lack of proper or adequate advice meant that they did not have the courage to go looking for a job more in keeping with their qualifications.

Several of the migrants who participated in the project in Poznań told the AMIGA team of their problems on the local labor market. Some migrants experienced difficulties relating to the complicated and lengthy processes involved in legalizing their stay. Others referred to problems with the recognition of their education and experience. Several foreign students mentioned that the rules governing their employment options were unclear. Some migrants had difficulties obtaining contracts and getting information about these rules from their employers. Those migrants who wanted to start their own business had been given no particular training or assistance before the AMIGA project. The procedure needed to start a business was complicated and included visits to several different local government offices (where migrants again faced language and cultural barriers). Even obtaining a driving license (or having their existing license officially recognized) was a challenge for some migrants – again due to the complexity of the procedure, a lack of information and language barriers.

The desire to stay in Munich/Germany is generally very strong among the target groups, especially where individuals have acquired professional or academic qualifications in Germany. However, the obstacles they encounter when looking for work often lead (highly) qualified migrants to move elsewhere or return to their home countries.

In Poznań, the will to stay varied across the three target groups. For students, the decision was linked to the subject of their studies, the language in which they studied, their country of origin and the options for employment. The regulations governing the legalization of residence were changed with effect from May 1, 2014. Now, graduates have the option of staying on for a year to look for jobs. Finding a job was a challenge, especially for graduates with a very limited command of Polish. In many cases, migrants with job placement challenges and migrant entrepreneurs (many of whom saw starting a business as the only way to gain employment) arrived in Poznań for personal and family reasons, as their partners were Polish citizens. Many such migrants intended to stay in spite of the difficulties, because they simply wanted their partners to be happy at home. Third-country nationals also found it more difficult to legalize their stay in other European Union countries. At the same time, migrants often inquired about their options to move to and work in other EU countries, because they were aware that salaries and living standards were higher in some other countries.

Qualified migrants who participated in the AMIGA project were very eager to start their own business. Many nevertheless delayed this decision for a long time due to a lack of awareness of the processes involved and of the German legal and tax systems. Many migrants also lacked sufficient knowledge of wider aspects (such as health and social insurance, pension insurance, official requirements and government services). Nor did they know where to turn to get advice and information:

*“It is a great challenge to even understand how you have to start and under what circumstances may I make up my own business. All the legal requirements are so complicated and interrelated that it is not as clear or not so easy to understand. And if because the authorities can not just help you, then it is difficult (...) There are so many exceptions, many special rules and so on (...) There are so many information gaps. We do not know exactly where to find the data or who to turn to. At the moment I do not know to whom I can order my question which legal form I should choose to apply.”*  
(Migrant from South America who wants to start a business in the logistics industry; interviewed as part of the AMIGA study)

For qualified migrants who are employed below their qualifications, the situation is particularly difficult. They are not eligible for many of the support services that are available, such as offers from local job center or the Federal Employment Agency. The majority of such offers – such as certain German courses and assistance with application forms – are open only to persons who are currently receiving benefits. A particularly wide range of offerings is available to provide training to individuals with few or no qualifications. Here again, however, highly qualified migrants do not match up with the requirements:

*“I think that in Germany more deals are for uneducated people out there than for those like me who qualified for. That surprises me so far, because it is always said that Germany needs qualified aliens.”*  
(Psychologist from a non-EU country interviewed as part of the AMIGA study)

Lastly, cultural differences – and a lack of awareness of these differences, among both migrants themselves and their German hosts – should not be underestimated. Cultural differences that hinder successful job searches come to light mainly in the application process to light: in the design of the résumé and cover letter, for example, in certain “do’s and don’ts” at job interviews, in expiry dates for the application process and so on.

Cultural barriers and stereotypes were also mentioned by some migrants in Poznań. These problems had a negative impact on both daily life and their employment options.

The barriers to job placement for the target groups outlined above are described in detail in the discussion of the expert groups’ findings in chapter 4. Chapter 4 also documents the range of services and offerings with which the AMIGA project sought to help the target groups improve their professional situation.

## **From identifying needs to providing services**

*Karolina Sydow/Magdalena Ziolek-Skrzypczak*

For AMIGA, one condition of successful integration support was to identify the target groups' needs and gain a better understanding of the life conditions. The above analysis is the product of continuous efforts to monitor the development of needs on the local labor markets and to identify the new challenges that project beneficiaries were bringing with them to AMIGA in Poznań and Munich. Clearly, certain challenges seem to be very similar for all groups in both cities: language problems, legal status and lack of knowledge of binding regulations.

Second, in order to address the identified challenges and avoid duplicating existing services, it was important to identify structures of cooperation among local institutions. Since the two cities started from very different positions and situations, this too influenced the choice of different activities within AMIGA project in some cases. In Poznań, AMIGA served to build new structures, while in Munich it served to coordinate those that already existed and fill any gaps in service provision. In both cases, the three target groups and their challenges were the focus of all activities undertaken by AMIGA in the course of the project.



4

AMIGA actions

## Introduction

*Karolina Sydow/Magdalena Ziolek-Skrzypczak*

The different situations of the three target groups presented in chapter 3 demonstrate just how many challenges the AMIGA project needed to address. It is fair to say that the project grew in scope as time went on. The more services the AMIGA project offered, the more offerings and the more manpower were needed. Thanks to the stamina and perseverance of the AMIGA teams, efforts were made to initiate several new activities that were not on the agenda at the beginning of the project. Fortunately, rather than overwhelming the AMIGA teams, the needs encountered in Poznań and Munich instead provided stimulus for new ideas for local offerings.

This chapter presents and discusses in detail all the activities undertaken during the two-year AMIGA project: those planned at the beginning of the project and those that were not originally envisaged, but that grew out of needs identified during the project. Similarly, this chapter also explains the various discrepancies between what was planned (see chapter 2) and what happened in practice.

Because the activities were designed to meet specific local needs, they were not identical in the two cities. Some of them were nevertheless very similar, while others were the result of cooperation and mutual inspiration. All the activities undertaken were designed to serve the common goals of the project and are therefore largely comparable: They all concern similar areas and, first and foremost, take into consideration the same breakdown into three distinct groups of migrants. The description of particular activities that follows pays special attention to the characteristic elements of each, outlines the advantages and disadvantages and suggests the direction that changes should pursue.

This chapter describes the various activities both separately (for Poznań and Munich in isolation) and collectively (for both cities together). It also explores four different angles on the same theme: First, it outlines transnational cooperation between the AMIGA teams in Poznań and Munich, focusing on Polish-German meetings and their main objectives, topics and conclusions. Second, it examines the work of networking with local players in the expert groups and the research conducted (separately) in each city. Third, it presents both similar and different ways of reaching out to the target groups depending on local peculiarities. Examples include street work in Poznań and the scouting campaign in Munich. Lastly, it discusses and examines the AMIGA services made available in each city, highlighting good practices and pointing out those that require modification or improvement.

All the lessons learned and experiences presented here resulted from daily attempts to answer the question: How can we make the AMIGA teams more effective and get them to work together better to achieve the project's objectives of helping migrants become integrated in the local labor market in keeping with their qualifications?



Polish language course in Poznań



Work group meeting for transnational cooperation, Poznań September 2014

## Transnational cooperation

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz/Karolina Sydow*

One core aspect of cooperation in the Polish-German work groups was (and still is) intensive dialogue about local conditions, objectives, implementation strategies and outcomes in both Poznań and Munich. Every effort was also made to explore how either partner might incorporate the other partner's successful practices in its own work, and thereby to explore how integration activities can be evaluated and implemented at the European level. The purpose of this joint publication of best practice examples is to encourage other cities and countries to apply proven approaches and the action strategies developed in the expert groups in their own contexts.

Transnational cooperation was coordinated by a steering committee made up of the relevant heads of department, the AMIGA project leaders and the project managers at the various local cooperation organizations. The latter include the Centre of Migration Studies (CeBaM) at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, the Department of Labor and Economic Development in Munich and operational partner GründerRegio M e.V.

Day-to-day discussions and the coordination of tasks shared by the teams in Poznań and Munich took place mostly by e-mail, supplemented by phone calls. To publish information about the goals and activities of the AMIGA project, a shared website was set up ([www.amiga-project.eu](http://www.amiga-project.eu)) which also contained a virtual collaboration platform (the "Forum"). This forum could be used both by the national expert groups and for transnational cooperation. Each expert group had its own "corner" of the forum that was maintained in the relevant local language. In addition, a separate section in English was set up for cooperation and dialogue between Munich and Poznań. The forum also served as an information platform and archive in which to post the minutes of the expert group meetings, newsletters from the project partners and relevant studies.

Dialogue between the AMIGA project teams was not solely restricted to the virtual domain, however. To allow either side to get to know the local conditions of its project partner and facilitate group work to draft and evaluate areas of action and possible solutions, four transnational meetings were also arranged in the course of the project:

- Kick-off meeting in Poznań (June 2013, 2 days)
- Work group meeting in Munich (December 2013, 2 days)
- Work group meeting in Poznań (September 2014, 2 days)
- Transnational congress and workshop in Munich (May 2015, 3 days)<sup>1</sup>

The **kick-off meeting** in June 2013 served mainly to let the team members get to know each other and present their project content and goals of both teams. Munich was represented not only by the project leaders and the project team, but also by delegates from strategic network partners such as the Munich branch of the Federal Employment Agency, the Munich University of Applied Sciences (MUAS), the Department of Public Order, Ludwig Maximilians Universität Munich (LMU) and Technische Universität München (TUM). The hosts from Poznań were represented by delegates from the following organizations:

- Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań: Anthropology; Careers Service; Centre for Migration Studies; Faculty of Educational Studies/Continuing Education and Career Consultancy Unit; International Office
- Center for Studies in English/Poznań University of Economics (PUE)
- Department of Citizens' and Foreigners' Affairs (FODCFA), Voivodeship of Wielkopolska
- District Employment Agency in Poznań
- Polish Migration Forum Foundation, Warsaw
- Poznań City Hall: Health and Social Issues Department; Training and Advisory Center/Business Activity and Agriculture Department
- Voivodeship Labor Office in Poznań

German-Polish work groups discussed target-group-specific issues that laid the foundations for local initiatives in the two cities during the course of the project. The aim was to identify common factors and differences with regard to the migration situation in the two cities and to encourage the transfer of experience. The kick-off meeting thus prepared the ground for the later work of the expert groups and for German-Polish cooperation. Discussion centered around existing offerings for and the needs of the target groups in Poznań and Munich, as well as exploring the legal framework for migrants within which the AMIGA project was required to operate. Milestones were also defined and challenges identified that were to be tackled by the next meeting. Examples include cooperation with experts and the expansion of local networks. The questions below outline the scope of work in the local expert groups, planned during the kick-off meeting in Poznań.

<p><b>Work-related situation of the 3 target groups</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Challenges</li> <li>● Scale (statistical data)</li> <li>● The role in the local economy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Services and networking for the 3 target groups</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What institutional support structure exists for the target groups on a national/local scale? How does it look in reality?</li> <li>● Do institutional forms of support for the target groups seem to cover their real needs?</li> <li>● Existing good support practices for the target groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reaching out to migrants</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What are the challenges and benefits of the “focused approach” toward migrants, e.g. providing services exclusively for migrants? Is this a sign of discrimination or of integration?</li> <li>● What are the advantages and disadvantages of long-term, bottom-up interaction and collaboration with the representatives of migrants and migrant communities? How should migrants be involved in decision-making processes and networking activities?</li> <li>● What are the best and worst strategies to encourage target groups to take part in programs, services and cooperation, even within the AMIGA project?</li> <li>● What potential methodological, ethical and interpersonal problems exist and how can they be avoided or resolved?</li> <li>● How can sociological/anthropological research contribute to the development of good support services?</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Milestones defined at the AMIGA kick-off meeting in Poznań in June 2013**

The **second transnational meeting** was held in Munich in December 2013. The two teams pooled their initial practical experience and discussed the operational steps taken to realize the defined goals. For example, the project partners supplied detailed information on the status of the scouting campaign in Munich, the activities of street workers in Poznań and the milestones achieved to date. Outside the work sessions, the delegation from Poznań visited Munich-based networking and cooperation partners to the AMIGA project, including the *InitiativGruppe e.V.* (for intercultural encounter and education), the Department of Public Order, the Munich University of Applied Sciences and the Information Center for Migration and Labor run by the *Arbeiterwohlfahrt Kreisverband München-Stadt e.V.* (local workers’ welfare organization). These visits gave the Polish partners an on-site impression of the many and varied offerings available in Munich, helping them get a clear picture of the close collaboration that exists with the experts at the Munich AMIGA team. For its part, the team from Poznań presented innovative and successful ways to reach out to the target groups, as well as explaining how the new Migration Info Point (MIP) set up under the aegis of AMIGA responds efficiently and professionally to inquiries from the population.

Poznań hosted the **third meeting** in September 2014. Here again, the focus was on pooling practical experience of reaching out to the target groups by deploying street workers (in Poznań) and mobilizing the scouting campaign (in Munich). Experts from both project groups presented the insights gained and results achieved to date, thereby laying an excellent foundation for ongoing discussion and both the identification of best practices and the need to refine and improve existing/pilot activities. For example, the reasons for irregular participation in free offerings were

discussed, as were possible ways to make participation more binding and regular (e.g. attendance of Polish courses in Poznań and involvement in the MigMENT mentoring program in Munich). The meeting was also used to begin initial preparations for the AMIGA congress in May 2015 and to outline the rough structure of the joint report.

**Summary:** Since the expert groups in Munich met in person about every six weeks, they used the **forum** right from the outset more as an archive than as a discussion forum. In Poznań, frequent use of the forum in the early stages became less and less frequent over time due to time constraints and the shortage of personnel resources. For daily communication between both the national and transnational cooperation partners, e-mails proved to be the most useful channel. Both project teams published **newsletters** in English to keep each other informed of project progress and local challenges. Despite intensive communication via e-mail, phone and Skype, it became apparent that regular meetings in person were also essential in order to structure the project modules and ensure successful project control.

These personal meetings were time-consuming and resource-intensive. However, they were extremely valuable as a way to foster mutual understanding, map out the project concept and define milestones. Seeing each other's daily working environment and being able to talk to local cooperation partners was a source of enrichment that benefited intercultural project work, also with a view to the international AMIGA target groups.

Poznań and Munich have different situations regarding the integration of migrants in the labor market and the social importance of this topic. As a percentage of the total population, Poznań has far fewer (qualified) migrants. Accordingly, the city also still has comparatively few service offerings. The challenges to job placement are comparable, however, even though the Polish expert group placed stronger emphasis on illegal employment, as there is a need for action on this topic in Poland. While Poznań attached great importance to the (first-time) creation of offerings for the target groups, one of the main challenges in Munich was to get a clear overview of all the many existing service offerings. To avoid duplicating structure, the AMIGA project in Munich did not offer any language courses, for example – unlike in Poznań.

With regard to migrant entrepreneurs, the project partners encountered fundamentally different conditions and problem areas. Accordingly, direct comparison would appear to make little sense on this score. What was interesting was the "outside view" that the partners from Poznań could take of the start-up services available in Munich. Conversely, the partners from Munich themselves had an outside view of how Poznań tackled its specific problems in relation to new businesses. These perspectives and experiences were definitely helpful when it came to designing new service offerings.

Both project partners confirmed the value of transnational experience sharing, which led to the implementation of specific, practical activities and the planning of future offerings:

- Following the model of the Phoenix Prize awarded by the City of Munich, a prize was also awarded to migrant companies in Poznań (see the section entitled “Positive image” in chapter 4).
- Poznań developed a poster campaign that was inspired by plans and ideas already implemented in Munich for city-wide diversity management.
- Learning from the aspects of Munich’s vast array of offerings are rather unmanageable, Poznań sought to build its “policy” toward migrants very clearly on cooperation with local players in this field, in order to create clear, common structures from the word go.
- Munich’s AMIGA team was able to benefit from Poznań’s Migration Info Point (MIP) concept and from their Polish colleagues’ experience of establishing this service. This was of central importance to the improvement of Munich’s information and advisory services, as the existence of multiple challenges to job placement necessitated a systemic approach in order to understand participants’ situation in its entirety and be able to provide appropriate support.
- During practical implementation of their information and advisory activities, the Munich team followed Poznań’s lead in providing business mobile phones for the scouting staff and defining regular phone-in consultation times.
- In the future – again following Poznań’s model – open consultation times, low access barriers to service offerings and regular (longer) meeting appointments are to be integrated in Munich’s advisory services.
- Within the framework of the AMIGA project, what are known as open days were organized at the start of the semester at Poznań’s universities. Various regional players such as the Foreigners Office, student associations, universities and representatives of the business community introduced themselves on these open days and provided general information about aspects of daily life (such as residence permits and health insurance), but also provided one-on-one advice. The response to these events was very good. Based on this model, experts from the Foreigners Office and representatives of the Bavarian economy, for example, will also take part in introductory events organized at Munich’s universities. Participants in the Munich expert group for international graduates and students will support these plans.

## Poznań: Expert groups

*Karolina Sydow*

In both Poznań and Munich, AMIGA attempted to develop a model of cooperation between different institutions whose activities and competencies are associated with migrants. In each city, we created three expert groups in line with the three defined groups of foreign nationals. The following table shows the composition of the expert groups in Poznań.

<b>Expert group 1: Migrants with job placement challenges</b>	Composition: District Employment Agency in Poznań, Department of Citizens' and Foreign Nationals' Affairs – Voivodeship of Wielkopolska, academic career offices, Polish Migration Forum Foundation in Warsaw, employers' associations, chambers of commerce, Regional Centre of Social Policy, Family Welfare Centre in Poznań, Centre for Migration Studies, AMIGA project staff.
<b>Expert group 2: International university graduates and students</b>	Composition: Representatives of six universities, Poznań City Hall (four departments), Department of Citizens' and Foreign Nationals' Affairs – Voivodeship of Wielkopolska, Centre for Migration Studies, AMIGA project staff.
<b>Expert group 3: Migrant entrepreneurs</b>	Composition: Training and Advisory Centre – Business Activity and Agriculture Department at Poznań City Hall, employers' associations, chambers of commerce, Centre for Migration Studies, AMIGA project staff.

**Figure 4: Composition of the expert groups in Poznań**

In Poznań, the teams were made up of representatives of various institutions that have dealings with immigrants, or that at least theoretically have something to do with the subject of migration. These institutions are: Poznań City Hall (several departments), the Department of Citizens' and Foreign Nationals' Affairs – Voivodeship of Wielkopolska, the District Employment Agency in Poznań, the Regional Centre of Social Policy, the Family Welfare Centre in Poznań and representatives of the majority of public universities. Experts specializing in the given topic under discussion were also invited to specific meetings. Depending on the subject matter, some of these experts were representatives of government departments or institutions from Poznań (and sometimes also from Warsaw and Lublin), while others were lawyers or representatives of employers' associations. In addition, all expert group meetings were always attended by the employees of the AMIGA project, the information and advisory point MIP and the street workers, who represented the opinions of the migrants. Right at the beginning of the group work, we also considered having foreign nationals themselves take part in the meetings, believing that their presence was absolutely essential. Poznań has no migrants' organizations, however, so it was difficult to know who should be invited. Inviting random individuals did not seem like a good idea: How could one or two foreign nationals realistically represent the point of view of such a diverse environment? For this reason, we ultimately decided that the opinion of migrants would have to be represented by employees of the project itself. Their role was to present cases reported by the migrants to the MIP, including details of any identified obstacles, problems and suggested changes.



**AMIGA training course in Poznań**

During the project, we gradually built up our cooperation with organizations and institutions outside Poznań. At the expert groups, we met together with representatives of organizations from Warsaw and Lublin. Activities targeted at migrants are something relatively new in all Polish cities, although some cities have more experience than Poznań. We therefore pooled our experience to seek the best solutions in the context of the same initial situation with regard to legislation and migration policy (or the lack thereof).

Establishing and developing cooperation with the university authorities was another important element. In our opinion, this contact had previously been insufficient and too unstructured. It was frustrating to find that no use was being made of existing research that could have been valuable to the local government. From the perspective of CeBaM, it was therefore important to show the practical benefits that government and business entities stood to gain from anthropological research.

For a city and a country in which migrants are still a relatively small group, the most important issues in the cooperation initiated by the expert groups were these:

- Drawing the attention of various institutions to issues relating to migrants;
- Building knowledge and awareness in this area, pointing out needed activities and showing possible solutions;
- Seeing the issue of migration and migrants as a topic not only for government institutions, but as one that demands the cooperation of many different actors;
- Raising awareness of the need for and value of structural solutions;
- Building a policy focused on migration and migrants, as well as introducing the various solutions in practice.

The expert groups shared their experience and information on the needs of migrants, any identified obstacles, how different institutions work and what activities they offer. The groups also drafted proposals to improve the current situation by introducing better practices at the relevant institutions and, more widely, in the city and throughout the region. In total, the expert groups held more than 20 meetings, as well as engaging in constant, ongoing communication. In the early months of the project, all three groups attended all meetings. After that, the work was divided into three groups. A description of the activities of each group is given below.

## Group 1: Migrants with job placement challenges

The following services were provided by the group:

- **Advice:** The group staked out the ground rules and organized individual career advice sessions, forming a group of advisors, overseeing their training and supervising their work. Advisors used a predefined form to produce reports on consultations to facilitate a better understanding of the needs and problems faced by migrants. Also workshops for job seekers were organized in collaboration with the Polish Migration Forum Foundation in Warsaw.
- **Migration Info Point (MIP):** The MIP staff provided information to both migrants and employers about formal and legal issues, gave advice on where to look for a job, arranged for guidance from other parties, signed migrants up for Polish courses designed primarily for this group. The opportunity to engage in contact and consultations with other group members was an essential aspect.
- **Information:** The group prepared information for migrants on formal and legal issues relating to the services and support provided in Poland. This information was posted on the Internet at [migrant.Poznań.pl](http://migrant.Poznań.pl), a website that contains information for employers and explains the obligations of employers who take on foreign nationals. We also prepared a folder containing the same information for employers. The group also gathered information about currently job fairs.
- **Contact with employers:** During the project, we made direct contact with two employers' associations and two chambers of commerce. Part of the group's work involved sharing information about individuals seeking employment with these organizations and with the MIP (where migrants expressed such a need). We also prepared a campaign entitled "Employers open to foreign nationals". To promote it, we reached out to employers by participating in fairs and visiting academic career offices and employers' associations. We also began to cooperate with employers who expressed an interest in hiring foreign nationals. They were then added to the list of employers published on the site.

## Group 2: International university graduates and students

The following services were provided by the group:

- **Surveys:** The group prepared two questionnaires, one addressed to first-year students and one for those about to graduate in Poznań. We wanted to know the reasons why people had chosen to study in Poznań and Poland, how they felt about their studies and the city, and what plans they had for future – i.e. whether they wanted to stay on in the city after graduation. Surveys were conducted among students at five universities and the results were assessed.
- **MIP and street workers:** We established and built up cooperation between universities, the MIP and the AMIGA staff. The aim was to optimize the flow

of information. At the beginning of the academic year, street workers attended functions such as open days/orientation events for newly arrived students at various universities.

Many students benefited from the support of the MIP, asking questions about formal and legal issues relating to the legalization of their residence, how to find work both during and after their studies and a variety of more general issues concerning life in Poznań and Poland.

- **Portal for foreign nationals:** The migrant.Poznań.pl website was also designed for use by students. In addition to general information about formal and legal issues, the site also featured other topics of use to students, examples of which included:
  - Dormitories and other forms of accommodation;
  - Job agencies and employers (especially in cases where no knowledge of Polish was required).
- **Advice on the labor market:** The group gathered information about job fairs held at various universities and elsewhere and circulated it to students. At one of these job fairs, we also ran a stand where foreign nationals could come for advice. Students and graduates were given the opportunity to meet with professional advisors and to attend training courses on how to start a business. Many students were eager to take advantage of these offerings.
- **Needs, obstacles and suggested trends:** Group meetings consistently highlighted the importance of raising the local government's and universities' awareness of their specific responsibilities. If they want foreign nationals to come, they must accept some responsibility for the situation of foreign nationals in Poznań. In this context, the group discussed several issues in particular:
  - Introducing open days at universities that did not yet have them;
  - Introducing and developing the Polish language courses offered by the universities;
  - Improving administrative services to provide better support to students support on issues relating to the legalization of residence, accommodation, insurance and other aspects of everyday life.

### Group 3: Migrant entrepreneurs

The following services were provided by the group:

- **Training courses:** The group was involved in planning and organizing training courses for migrants wishing to start a company. They developed training materials on this subject and had them translated into three languages (English, Russian and Spanish). A translated guide for entrepreneurs was published at [www.migrant.Poznań.pl](http://www.migrant.Poznań.pl) and on the Business Activity and Agriculture Department website.

- **Advice:** The group oversaw the organization of personal advice on how to run a business. This advice was subsumed under the activities of the Training and Advisory Centre at Poznań City Hall. Thanks to close cooperation between the AMIGA project and the Training and Advisory Centre, migrants who expressed a need for such advice at the MIP were put directly in touch with a suitable expert for consultation. Advisors used a predefined form to produce reports on consultations in order to analyze and facilitate a better understanding of the needs and problems faced by migrants.
- **MIP and the virtual MIP:** Cooperation within the group allowed assistance to be provided to migrants faster and more efficiently. The MIP allowed migrants address their various concerns directly to the relevant local government employees. At the same time, the MIP and the street workers acted as an intermediary between migrants and the available offerings, that they could take advantage of. The portal migrant.Poznań.pl published legal information of relevance to the launch of new businesses, as well as training materials taken from the program “Step-by-step to your own business in Poland”.
- **Competition:** Right from the start of the project, the group engaged in consultations on ways to make the Poznań Leader of Entrepreneurship competition more open to foreign nationals. In the 2015 edition, there were plans to create a separate category: an award for the best migrant entrepreneur. Ultimately, these plans did not work out. For the first time, however, it became possible for special prizes to be awarded to the best migrant entrepreneurs. We prepared an intensive promotion campaign for the competition among migrants, including advertising in the press and on the radio.
- **Promotional campaign:** Profiles of migrant entrepreneurs were presented in the local press and on our website.
- **Network development:** In the course of the project, we expanded the composition of the group as we cultivated contacts with employers’ associations and international chambers of commerce.

## Summary

Some of the cases that the groups dealt with concerned similar issues. This was due both to the fact that the three groups of migrants shared similar needs in some cases and to the fact that some of AMIGA’s offerings were available equally to all migrants (e.g. the MIP, vocational guidance and training on starting a business). Despite these similarities, however, the work of the expert groups also involved creating distinct profiles for the various service offerings, tailoring them to the specific needs of each group and using different methods to reach out to individual groups with the relevant information.

The cooperation nurtured during the AMIGA projects yielded many benefits. Here are three examples:

- Setting up a network of contacts and establishing genuine cooperation between officials was useful in the context of everyday work. Local government officials, MIP employees and street workers were able to consult with each other in the course of dealing specific cases involving foreign nationals. Employees of the Training and Advisory Centre that provides advice on issues relating to new company launches, for example, consulted with the Department of Citizens' and Foreign Nationals' Affairs on complex cases regarding the legalization of residence (as certain forms of residence affect whether a new company can be registered). Staff were able to simply phone up while talking to the migrant, which facilitated and shortened the advisory process. For most officials cooperation between the authorities was something new. All of them nevertheless acknowledged its value and were keen to continue in the same vein.
- Contact and cooperation established with the authorities and organizations in other cities prompted both specific activities in the AMIGA project and the development of future forms of cooperation. Many migrant workers' cases involved consulting with the Association for Legal Intervention in Warsaw by phone. Based on this cooperation, the Centre for Migration Studies prepared a joint project with this Association that allowed the activities of the MIP to continue for another year. During this time, work will continue to develop the powers and activities of advisors and lawyers on the ground in Poznań.
- Cooperation between universities and local authorities was initially hindered by stereotypical prejudices held by both researchers and officials. Universities' initial distance to local government employees in the scientific community was partly rooted in the notion that government officials are incompetent, treat foreign nationals like objects and are not open to change. Conversely, government officials' reluctance to cooperate with universities and anthropologists stemmed partly from a lack of trust in the competence of scientists, based on the assumption that their nice theories tend to be detached from reality and that they have no idea of the real situations and challenges faced by officials in the course of their work. The contact initiated and established between the two environments allowed both sides to overcome – or at least begin to question – their preconceived ideas about each other.

The expert groups did a tremendous amount of work but were naturally unable to meet all of their objectives. Nor was it possible to initiate cooperation with certain institutions. For example, the expert group set up to focus on migrant entrepreneurs failed in its attempts to establish active cooperation with the Department of Social Security and the Tax Office.

We are also aware that the cooperation initiated should in future include more people in managerial positions at particular government offices. This would undoubtedly enable the matters discussed to be resolved and implemented more successfully

at the institutional level. Above all, it would help create a situation in which structural changes were initiated from the top down, instead of having ad-hoc changes that depend on individual units made from the bottom up.

The AMIGA project set the following goals for ongoing work of the expert groups in the near future:

- Establish a group of lawyers who specialize in cases involving foreign nationals;
- Nurture cooperation with employers via chambers of commerce and employers' associations;
- Develop and strengthen cooperation with institutions and organizations in other Polish cities;
- Set up an advisory group for migrants that should be linked to the activities of the Mayor of Poznań;
- Clearly define which institutions and local government offices are responsible for what in the context of the ongoing AMIGA project.

## Munich: Expert groups and surveys

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz*

To analyze the potential and problems of the target groups and then formulate recommendations for action, one **expert group** (work group) was set up for each of the three identified target groups in both Poznań and in Munich (i.e. three expert groups in total in each city). These groups were made up of representatives of institutions, organizations and initiatives that interact with the target groups, such as employment agencies, local governments, chambers of commerce, scientific institutes, universities, non-government organizations and migrants' organizations. Each expert group was organized and led by a designated moderator (see figure 5). By utilizing **networks** of individual participants and institutions and **sharing information** with each other, the expert groups were charged with investigating the potential and problems of the target groups in order to develop strategies to integrate the target groups in the local labor market.

In Munich, the expert groups were led by a moderator and met regularly every six weeks or so. The moderators came either from network partners or were municipal employees. They were allowed to discharge their moderating duties during their regular work time. Alternatively, if this could only be done outside of their regular work time, commensurate compensation was paid. The outcomes of the group meetings were recorded in minutes and circulated to members via a virtual platform (or forum). Where necessary, subgroups met to work on specific topics. The issues addressed by and tasks assigned to the expert groups were coordinated by a **project steering committee**. This body consisted of the moderators from the expert groups, the project leaders and the project management. The research work conducted as part of the AMIGA project was accompanied by a **scientific steering committee** made up of the project leaders, the project management and scientific experts. Figure 5 provides an overview of the expert groups, the project steering committee and the scientific steering committee in Munich.

<b>Project steering committee</b>	Project leader (Department of Labor and Economic Development) Project manager (GründerRegio M e.V.) Expert group moderators
<b>Expert group 1: Qualified migrants with job placement challenges</b>	Moderation: Employment Agency Munich Composition: AMIGA project leader and project manager, AMIGA scouts, Caritas Verband, DAA Deutsche Angestellten Akademie, IBZ Beruf Mitte West, Infozentrum Migration/Arbeiterwohlfahrt, InitiativGruppe – Interkulturelle Begegnung und Bildung e.V., JobCenter, MigraNet (employers' advisory center on the law governing recognition of foreign qualifications), Munich Adult Education Center, City of Munich's Department of Education and Sports (Educational Advisory Service), City of Munich's Social Services Department (Foreign Qualifications Support Service)
<b>Expert group 2: International graduates and students</b>	Moderation: Department of Public Order, Service Center for Foreign Professionals Composition: Employment Agency Munich/Service Unit for Academics, AMIGA project leader and project manager, AMIGA scouts, get2gether Student Network Initiative Munich, GründerRegio M e.V., Munich University of Applied Sciences, Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria, City of Munich's Department of Public Order/Foreigners Office, Ludwig Maximilians Universität Munich, City of Munich's Department of Education and Sports, Munich Student Union, Technische Universität München, Vbw Vereinigung der Bayerischen Wirtschaft e.V. (Bavarian Industry Association)
<b>Expert group 3: Migrant entrepreneurs</b>	Moderation: Department of Labor and Economic Development/Economic Development Department Composition: AMIGA project leader and project manager, AMIGA scouts, Employment Agency Munich, Guide/GründerRegio M e.V., Chamber of Crafts and Small Industries for Munich and Upper Bavaria, Infozentrum Migration und Arbeit/Arbeiterwohlfahrt, Institute on Liberal Professions, Nuremberg, JobCenter, City of Munich's Department of Public Order, Ludwig Maximilians Universität Munich, MORGEN Network of Munich Migrants' Organizations, Strascheg Center for Entrepreneurship
<b>Scientific steering committee</b>	Project leader (Department of Labor and Economic Development) Project manager (GründerRegio M e.V.) Scientific support team (Chair of General Educational Theory and Educational Research at the Ludwig Maximilians Universität Munich)

Figure 5: Composition of the expert groups in Munich

## Group 1: Qualified migrants with job placement challenges

The expert groups began their work by defining the topics and issues they were to address, all of which are discussed below. Expert group 1 focused on “qualified migrants with job placement challenges” and defined the following topics:

- Identify those job placement challenges that are of relevance to the target group.
- Analyze the target group's situation with regard to the job placement challenges identified by the expert group.
- Intensify contact with the target group to validate the experience and assumptions of the expert group members; conduct a qualitative study to identify the subjective experience and needs of individuals in the target group who face job placement challenges.
- Compare these subjective experiences and needs with the projections of the expert group.
- Formulate recommendations for action based on this comparison.

## Group 2: International university graduates and students

Constant growth in the number of new international students confirms Munich's standing as an attractive venue for this target group. Within the framework of the AMIGA project, expert group 2 therefore turned its attention to "international university graduates and students", seeking to formulate recommendations for action on how this target group can be given easier access to the local labor market. Alongside the need for networking across relevant institutions and organizations, this group concentrated on the following topics:

- Identify the reasons why international graduates and students stay in Germany after graduation.
- Compare the target group's perspective on this issue with the views of the expert group itself.
- Identify the factors that make the decision to stay easier or more difficult.
- Identify the influence of regional players on international students and their career decisions.
- Catalog the activities already in place to facilitate integration in the labor market.
- Formulate recommendations for action to strengthen networking and cooperation between regional players.

## Group 3: Migrant entrepreneurs

"Migrant entrepreneurs" was the target group addressed by expert group 3, which focused on two key issues. Its first aim was to forge closer links between those public and private institutions, organizations and other initiatives in Munich that play an active part in the business start-up context, and to analyze the extent to which they provide services and support to entrepreneurs with a migration background. Second, it sought to improve access to entrepreneurs with a migration background. Expert group 3 resolutely avoided the indiscriminate development of activities and strategies that could well bypass the real needs of the target group, instead attempting to involve more multipliers from Munich's various migrant communities in its own group work and discussions.

Expert group aimed to:

- Analyze the situation of migrant entrepreneurs in Munich.
- Analyze and catalog existing activities for this target group in Munich.
- Build a cooperative network of institutions, organizations and initiatives.
- Intensify contact with the target group by involving migrant multipliers in this network.
- Solicit feedback from the target group about existing service offerings for entrepreneurs (with a migration background) and what services they see as lacking.
- Publishing a set of recommendations for strategies and activities to support migrant entrepreneurs.

Possible “side-effects”:

- Increase the sustainability of the new businesses launched by migrant entrepreneurs.
- Overcome a lack of trust toward public institutions.
- Develop more services and support for migrant entrepreneurs by closing perceived gaps.
- Establishing group meetings as a space for intensive dialogue and “getting to know each other” on an institutional level (fields of responsibility, offerings for the target group, cooperative activities etc.).

## Scientific study

The expert groups were also involved in formulating the research questions for the scientific study. In light of the current debate about demographic change, migrant labor is seen as a vital source of potential to meet ongoing demand for qualified labor. Against this backdrop, the AMIGA project conducted the first empirical study of the situation of qualified migrant job seekers (target group 1) and potential migrant entrepreneurs (target group 3) in Munich on the basis of a personal questionnaire. The study was conducted in collaboration with the Chair of General Educational Theory and Educational Research at the Ludwig Maximilians Universität Munich.

In spring 2014, the research questions, the sample and initial key questions were defined by the scientific steering committee in collaboration with the relevant expert groups. A preliminary test was conducted at the end of April, followed by interviews between May and July 2014. A total of 28 interviews were conducted, with eight interviews transcribed from each of the two target groups involved in this process. In consultation with the project leaders and the project management, these 16 interviews were analyzed by the scientific experts (at the LMU). The findings of the study with regard to the challenges facing the target groups were presented in expert groups 1 and 3 in December 2014. The two groups discussed and categorized the findings with a view to formulating recommendations for action. The findings of the study with regard to the description of the target groups are discussed in chapter 3. A summary of the study is presented on page 86.

Expert group 2 was involved in the conceptual design of a quantitative study of international graduates and students at Munich universities. This study was initiated and led by the City of Munich’s Department of Labor and Economic Development. It was conducted in the form of an online survey with the aim of gathering information about the reasons why students choose to study in Munich, whether they intend to stay on after graduation, their experience on the local labor market and their need for support to become integrated in the local labor market. At the time when this report was produced, the survey phase was already completed. Analysis is expected to be completed by early summer 2015.



AMIGA seminar about application procedure, Munich



Participants of AMIGA seminar about work and residence permits, Munich

Another important aspect of the expert groups' work in Munich was to cultivate links between the individual group members in order to improve practical, day-to-day collaboration and explore possible synergies. For this reason, group meetings were also used as an opportunity for members to introduce their institutions and service offerings, such as German classes, start-up advice and general advice to migrants. The primary focus was on identifying possible interfaces for cooperation and sharing experience with regard to integration of the target groups in the local labor market.

Networking activities in the expert groups gave the project a clear overview of the many and varied service offerings and activities that are available to the AMIGA target groups in Munich. Since the aim was to optimize existing offerings and develop new ones where necessary without creating duplicate structures, this was essential in order to lay a foundation on which to provide assistance (in the form of an overview of German courses in Munich, for example) and make recommendations for action.

**Guests** were also invited to the expert group meetings depending on the key topics addressed. Expert group 3, for instance, welcomed migrants who had already successfully launched a business. These guests reported on their experience during the start-up process, their need for support and how they went about finding the information they needed.

The virtual platform provided by the AMIGA forum was available to enable the group members to stay in touch above and beyond their face-to-face meetings. Invitations, minutes, work results and documents from the expert groups were made available for download in this forum. The forum also provided an opportunity to process and discuss questions outside the framework of the individual meetings. In addition, relevant background information, studies and articles were available to all project experts in a shared cloud storage facility.

## Findings of the expert groups

**Expert group 1** identified the following **job placement challenges** for the qualified migrants who constituted its target group. Since these challenges make it difficult for qualified migrants to become permanently integrated in the labor market, ways to find solutions were tackled in the course of the project:

- Language problems: an inadequate command of German or no knowledge of the language at all
- Lack of systemic knowledge about authorities, where to turn for advice and processing procedures, possibly coupled with a fear of authorities
- Employers' reluctance to take on migrants due to a lack of information (e.g. with regard to residence law and the recognition of qualifications) and prejudices against certain countries of origin
- Employment in unfamiliar lines due to the lack of recognition for qualifications, or to the simple need to earn money and cover the cost of living
- Lack of recognition of existing qualifications
- Lack of self-esteem
- Obsolete qualifications
- Lack of practical experience of migrants' vocation either at home or abroad

These challenges were tackled in line with a plan defined in advance by both AMIGA teams. Following the analysis of job placement challenges, the existing service offerings and possibilities to resolve these issues in Munich were cataloged. The key questions asked were "What can be done?" and "What activities are in place to deal with the situation?" Suggestions for better ways to reach the target group were then gathered (based on the questions "What offerings are missing?" and "Do providers have to be closely networked?") in order to produce recommendations for action. The findings of the qualitative study, i.e. the interviews conducted with qualified migrants, also flowed into this approach.

Analysis of the job placement challenges within the expert group found that some challenges – such as problems with the German language and unrecognized qualifications earned abroad (in the migrant's home country) – are only of relevance to the target group. By contrast, other challenges – such as a lack of practical experience of a vocation and obsolete qualifications – are also perceived as challenges by unemployed persons and job seekers who do not have a migration background.

With regard to the challenge of an "inadequate command of German", it should be noted that migrants' language skills and willingness to learn the language vary very considerably. There are also differences in their knowledge of what is required on the German labor market. The expert group was unable to make a clear statement about the "average" level of German skills and the willingness of qualified migrants (classified by age, country of origin and time spent in Germany) to learn German.

Since an adequate knowledge of the language is fundamental to successful integration in the labor market, the **analysis of support services** focused primarily on offers

of German language tuition. There is no shortage of **language courses** in Munich. Courses are available for every conceivable level, using a wide range of different teaching and time models. There are also many ways to finance these courses. No single member of the expert group was aware of all the service offerings and modes of financing. It is therefore reasonable to assume that it will also be difficult for the target group to gain a clear overview. This situation led the expert group to formulate the recommendation that a clear list of all providers of German tuition and all financing options should be compiled and made available to everyone. This would be useful not only to migrants, but also to the advisory units themselves. One difficulty, however, would be finding the logistical and personnel capacity to keep this overview up to date.

The sheer diversity of language course offerings from public and private providers made it very difficult to assess whether these courses were adequate for the target group. Moreover, an additional need was identified for tuition for individuals who are currently employed in jobs not in keeping with their educational or academic qualifications. Compared to unemployed persons, this group is less flexible in terms of time and thus depends on the availability of courses in the evenings or at weekends. At the same time, they do not usually qualify for the kind of financial assistance that is available to people registered as jobless, as they are in gainful employment. As a result, this group has to pay for its own language courses.

Regarding migrants' **lack of or insufficient systemic knowledge** about authorities, where to turn for advice and procedural processes, and regarding the fear of authorities that they may have, the expert group arrived at the following findings: Most migrants know the standard points of contact and authorities, such as the Federal Employment Agency, the Department of Public Order (Foreigners Office) and community centers. However, some migrants are somewhat suspicious or afraid of these organizations, perhaps because of past experiences of discrimination. Here again, though, the spectrum is very broad. Some groups of migrants are very well informed about possible social welfare benefits, while others know nothing of their rights and entitlements. One gets the impression that non-government advisory centers are frequently unknown, to some extent because the standard points of contact provide no information about them (or are unable to do so, because they themselves are unaware of these facilities). In many cases, information about support and advisory services is therefore shared informally within the individual migrant groups.

In recent years, local government authorities have made great improvements in terms of customer-friendliness and offers of support, such as interpreting services. It seems that a transition has, at least in part, already taken place. However, if the target group is also to be made aware of non-government service offerings, the expert group sees an urgent need for network links to be forged between the various organizations. The picture here is similar to that in the case of language courses: Given the vast quantity of information and the natural volatility of service offerings (due to limited subsidies and project runtimes, for example), not even

experts who work full time and every day with the target group are aware of all offerings that are of relevance to the target group. The “market” is so cluttered that some of these experts feel unable to always give their customers full information and exhaustive advice. As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that it is even more difficult for migrants themselves to obtain this information. Ultimately, they thus depend on information from friends and relatives – information that they are unable to validate – and may thus miss out on good opportunities to accelerate their own integration in the local labor market.

Successful **networking** efforts within the AMIGA expert groups proved useful in this context, as the various participants were able to add to their knowledge of who is responsible for what offerings. This knowledge could then be circulated to the various institutions. Collaboration between members of the expert groups who already knew each other before the AMIGA project became more intensive in the course of the project, while dialogue was also initiated between members who did not yet know each other. The fact that specific contact persons are now known at the various participant organizations makes the experts’ routine work significantly easier.

To summarize, the following statements can be made about the ability to pass on **information** about existing service offerings and the need for additional support services: Information about existing offerings (e.g. language courses, interpreting services and job application training) does not reach the target group to a sufficient degree. When publicizing existing activities, it would therefore make sense to strengthen links and information-sharing practices between relevant providers. In this way, institutions that do not have suitable offerings of their own can always pass applicants on to other providers. When seeking to communicate with the target groups themselves, it is advisable to use as many different information channels as possible, as information gathering patterns vary considerably within these groups. This recommendation was also noted in the two other expert groups. In seeking to pass on information, it also proved useful to involve migrants’ organizations and multipliers from the target group itself, as was done in the AMIGA scouting campaign (a detailed account of which is provided below).

The expert group’s analysis also found that, within the wider target group of qualified migrants, there is one group of people whose need for support cannot be adequately satisfied at the present time. This finding was confirmed by the large number of inquiries from this group that were received by the AMIGA office. The group in question comprises migrants who are already employed in positions not in keeping with their qualifications, as they do not qualify for many of the existing service offerings. This may be because the timing of courses and seminars is not compatible with the hours of gainful employment, or because employed persons are not eligible for financial support.

The expert group also debated the extent to which prejudices and the reluctance of employers to take on migrants in general and persons from certain countries of

origin in particular makes integration in the local labor market more difficult. The advisory practice engaged in by the AMIGA experts shows that this is the impression given to some parts of the target group. To draw on the experience and perspective of the business community, experts from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria (IHK) and the Chamber of Crafts and Small Industries for Munich and Upper Bavaria (HWK) were called in to participate in the work of the expert group.

The discussion arrived at the following conclusions:

- The Chamber of Commerce and Industry and, in particular, the Chamber of Crafts and Small Industries represent mostly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including micro-enterprises. Their situation and the way they handle the acquisition and recruiting of qualified migrants can only be compared to practices at international corporations to a limited extent.
- Many companies are too small to have a separate human resources department. Moreover, the impact of poor personnel decisions is significantly greater for SMEs, a fact that may lead them to avoid what they perceive as risks and uncertainties in their recruiting policy.
- Some employers also have reservations about the work ethic and commitment to performance of other cultures. While the chambers are seeking to remedy this perception through educational work, it is still up to the employers to take advantage of it or not.
- Many employers know little about the education systems in other countries. Logically, therefore, they are not in a position to judge whether qualifications obtained abroad satisfy the demands of a given vacancy in Germany. That is why the recognition of foreign qualifications and certificates of equivalence are very important.
- Companies' willingness to employ qualified migrants is also conditioned by supply and demand. In some industries this is already standard practice and established programs focus on attracting qualified labor and even trainees from abroad. In many cases, however, these programs fall at the hurdle of financing.
- The representatives of employers see a knowledge of German as a crucial factor in the decision to take on qualified migrants. This is seen as important to enable migrants both to properly discharge their duties and to become integrated with their colleagues in the daily running of the company and in communication flows. Very few employers can afford language courses specially for new recruits. On this point, an overview of financial subsidy options would make sense for both employers and employees.
- Representatives of industry also see migrants' willingness to become integrated in the host society as an indicator of how long they intend to stay in Germany, and this is another important criterion for them. Employers are usually keen to fill vacancies for the long term. Accordingly, it is important to them to have employees who are not likely to hand in their notice after a short time and take what they have learned back to their home country. It is therefore important for job seekers with a migration background to make it clear in their applications that they are integrated in German society. This claim can, for instance, be sub-

stantiated by acquired language skills, but also by continuing efforts to improve those skills and by private commitment to (German) clubs and societies.

Dialogue with representatives of industry added considerable value for the members of the expert group, who were able to apply the information thus received in their day-to-day work and consultations. The findings of these discussions were also channeled into the following recommendations for action:

- Supply employers with more information about options for the recognition of foreign qualifications and for certificates of equivalence (e.g. at trade fairs and in seminars)
- Improve employers' awareness of the potential of qualified migrants and how their company stands to gain (in terms of diversity management), e.g. by highlighting this topic in employers' networks
- Prepare a list of financial subsidy options for vocational German courses (e.g. from the Employment Agency Munich)
- Enable applicants to prepare applications that focus on their individual strengths
- Recruit employers to pool their experience in relation to the question "What do employers expect of applicants?", e.g. by involving employers/HR managers in application training courses
- Build platforms – such as the AMIGA job fairs and mentoring partnerships – that facilitate direct dialogue between applicants and employers

In the context of recruiting and retaining qualified labor for Germany/Munich, it is important to ask about **the reasons why international students decide** to study in Germany/Munich. It is also very useful to know why graduates decide for or against a continued stay in Germany after completing their studies. In the perception of **expert group 2**, the German education system in general, and German universities in particular, enjoy an excellent reputation throughout the world.

Economic factors also play a part. They include the unemployment rates in migrants' home countries, the income structure in Germany, career development opportunities in this country, on-the-job development and training offerings and the shortage of qualified labor that Germany communicates openly. At the same time, the large number of international companies with many years' experience of recruiting qualified international labor add to Munich's attraction as a venue for study and employment. Graduates also find access to an open and transparent labor market. Germany is regarded as a politically stable country with a high level of social security (health and social insurance).

Increasing numbers of international students in recent years have created a situation in which newcomers already find a diverse array of established international communities. This makes it easier for them to get started here, find their way around Germany's society and academic structures, and become integrated in the local community. Many new international students already have friends and/or relatives in Germany, so they have initial points of contacts as soon as they arrive. The large number of private international student associations provides a wealth of

information and helpful hints, also serving as a useful source of information before the decision is taken to come to Germany.

In addition, a number of simplifications and incentives in recent years have made it easier for international students and qualified migrants in particular to legalize their residence in Germany, as described in chapter 3. By no means least, financial considerations too play a significant part in decisions about whether to study in Germany. Education here is largely free of charge; and aliens law now admits far more opportunities for international students to pay their way, at least in part, by taking up secondary employment and internships. This considerably eases the pressure on parents who finance their children's studies, usually from the students' home countries.

Difficulties with the German language are regarded as the biggest **challenge to successful integration** in the German labor market. While universities are broadening their range of international offerings by teaching more courses in English, most of the jobs available on the German labor market require a good to very good command of German. This is all the more true in the service sector and public administrations. While graduates in the MINT disciplines have an advantage because of the internationalization of science and research, the German language skills of graduates are all the more important in the humanities. In this regard, the expert group speaks of the "pseudo-internationalization" of university courses offered in Munich. In the past, language skills in line with reference level B 1 were a precondition of entry to Germany for a period of study. Today, however, there is an observable increase in the number of international students whose German and English skills are not sufficient to allow them to successfully complete their studies and/or take up gainful employment after graduation. The experts representing business and student associations in particular are thus calling for language courses to play a more prominent role in curriculums. Moreover, the fact that German language skills are needed to ensure successful subsequent integration in the labor market should be pointed out to students as soon as they begin their education.

In this context, representatives of the universities stress that universities see themselves as research and teaching establishments, and that their primary mandate is not train candidates for the local labor market in line with the wishes of the business community. In response, we would simply point to the goals of the Bologna Process. Key elements of the intended convergence process include a two-tiered system of higher education degrees that qualify the holder for entry to a profession (typically in the form of bachelor's or master's degrees) and, especially in Germany, a study orientation that aims to make graduates employable on the labor market. This goal in particular must involve more teaching of German language skills.

Whereas Germany sees itself as a migration country with a singularly welcoming culture, the experience of the members of the experts group does not always line up with this view. Administrative, cultural and legal barriers present obstacles not only to inward migration but also to integration. The situation is made worse by a lack of group-specific offerings (relating to access to the labor market and cultural

acclimatization, for example), as well as a lack of social contact with German fellow students. International students essentially socialize only with other students of the same or comparable origin.

The expert group believes that Germany's "welcoming culture" places too little emphasis on cultural differences, especially within the framework of university education. A German university education normally presupposes that practical experience will be gathered during a person's studies. International students from third countries in particular are at a double disadvantage on this count: Unlike European and German students, their opportunities to work during their courses of study are restricted. Yet precisely they are more dependent on their own ability to co-finance their studies. While their fellow students enjoy theoretically unlimited opportunities to gather the necessary practical experience through internships, traineeships etc. after successfully completing their studies, international students are compelled to furnish evidence of employment in keeping with their academic qualifications at the latest 18 months after graduating. Otherwise, most of them lose their right to stay in Germany. For them, the pressure to succeed is far greater, but the prospects of success are far lower. This being the case, it is all the more important to emphasize the differences in the German education and employment system right at the start of courses of study, and to provide more focused support to compensate for the resultant disadvantages.

"Inexpensive" education in Germany has a powerful attraction. It can, however, also be one reason why students do not plan to stay in Germany long-term. Cost considerations are the most important factor for some students, causing other – perhaps more critical – arguments to be regarded as only secondary. Moreover, the illusion of low-cost education in Germany is often exposed by the high cost of living and by housing shortages in agglomerations such as Munich. Not a few plans to study here have been thwarted by these issues. These, then, are some of the known factors that influence people's decision whether or not to study in Germany and, subsequently, to stay here and take up employment.

Alongside the above factors that influence the career decisions of international students, the various actors in Germany – local authorities, the universities, the business community and student associations – likewise have a direct impact. Discussions within the expert group noted that Munich offers a broad spectrum of support services to international students, examples being mentoring programs and start-up consulting. The question must nevertheless be asked why relevant information does not find its way to the students who need it. This is indeed true for international and German students alike. One possible cause is that, when they begin their studies, students are inundated with a flood of information that the various institutions see as relevant. However, the students themselves are often unable to decide what information is genuinely important for whom. Since this initial supply of information appears to be very important, it is therefore worth thinking about how and by whom it could better be disseminated. It should also be remembered that the universities see themselves as institutes of learning and re-



Analyze and catalog existing activities for different target groups – one task of the AMIGA expert groups

search, not as advisors on all matters pertaining to everyday life. A balance must be found between providing comprehensive support and encouraging independence.

As discussed above, advice to international students should make greater provision for their cultural background. Forms of study vary substantially from country to country, for example. In some countries, university tuition is at times more like the teaching provided in German schoolrooms, with the students being given clear instructions on the content of lessons. By contrast, Germany's universities demand far more independent initiative on the part of students.

More open and honest advertising for Germany as a venue for studies would also make it easier for actors in Germany to keep the promises made to international students. German universities are increasingly selling themselves as international study venues with a growing number of international study courses. Germany also presents itself as an open country in which a welcoming culture is lived out. In practice, however, obvious shortcomings still exist. The welcoming culture is still a work in progress; and the internationalization of Germany as a venue for study and employment has not yet made significant progress in all areas. Language barriers are seen as the biggest problem. Many administrative necessities such as visits to authorities and the handling of employment contracts presuppose that international students and graduates possess a good to very good knowledge of German. Yet the reality is that many students have only an inadequate grasp of English or German. This, too, is a factor that influences the by no means negligible student dropout rate and difficulty in finding commensurate employment after graduation. On this score, regional actors still have much to do to improve their services and how they formulate their requirements.

In future, the City of Munich's Foreigners Office plans to cooperate more closely with the universities. Regular dialogue with universities and the Munich Student Union are conceivable, as is participation in information events. The aim is to provide better advice to international students on the subject of staying and working in Germany.

According to a company survey of the recruiting and integration of qualified migrants in Upper Bavaria, conducted in July 2014 by the Chamber of Commerce

and Industry, about a third of the respondent companies would like more specific information about integration at the workplace, as well as support from a central service department. The local government administration, the Federal Employment Agency and the other cooperation partners in Munich must all play their part in this regard.

**Expert group 3** concerned itself with **migrant entrepreneurs**. Besides **enabling group members to get to know each other and engage in dialogue**, the group meetings served primarily to assemble a clear overview of existing offerings, identify any duplications and identify where necessary services are still missing. To this end, the group initially explored what general offerings each institution has available, and which ones are tailored specifically to migrant entrepreneurs, the target group for this expert group. This information-gathering exercise found few offerings that are accessible “exclusively” to migrants. Most are open to anyone who is interested, irrespective of their nationality. As a general rule, this approach is to be welcomed.

The target group comprising entrepreneurs with a migration background is very heterogeneous. Not least with a view to communicating information about the requirements to start a business and how to apply for support offerings, it therefore makes sense to **break the overall target group down into segments**. In some cases, these target group segments form themselves from the perspective of the institutions that serve them. Examples include the Guide project (which targets women) and projects run by the Federal Employment Agency (which target job seekers). In addition, the expert group defined the following criteria, which are of great importance to the formation of target group segments:

- Language skills
- Level of education
- Knowledge of how things work in Germany
- Industry affiliation

Above and beyond these four criteria, the target group could be further subdivided in any number of other ways. However, the opinion of the expert group was that such breakdowns are of little use to the development of support activities:

Academic University-related start-up	Unemployed	Ethnic roots/ cultural origins	Language skills
Gender	EU citizen (yes/no)	Age	Not employed in keeping with qualifications
Start-ups	New migrants	Integrated migrants	Level of education
Knowledge of the “German system”	Women	Industry affiliation	Experience on the German labor market

Table 2: Possible segmentation of the “migrant entrepreneurs” target group (excerpt)

Breaking the target group down into segments and describing each one individually is especially important to attempts to reach these segments, as it facilitates better analysis of their interests (e.g. industry affiliations) and needs, and as it is then easier to identify where the target group will “turn up”. The table below suggests a number of ways in which the **target group could be reached**:

Involve migrant multipliers (e.g. organizations, associations, initiatives) to reach out to the target groups	Integrated trusted ambassadors: (successful) entrepreneurs with a migration background	Analyze and raise awareness at the target group’s first ports of call (for all new arrivals in Munich)
Maintain a presence in migrants’ networks and spread word of offerings	Host shared events and actively participate in the target group’s events	Make use of relevant social media channels
Analyze websites used by the target group and create digital offerings (e.g. a virtual one-stop agency)	Do press work in media consumed by the target group	Involve the target group in designing offerings
Establish contact with individual industry networks	Launch projects that relate to migrants (e.g. AMIGA, StartMiUp etc.)	Produce print and information material (in several languages, where appropriate) to establish initial contact

**Table 3: Ways in which the target group can be reached (excerpt)**

Any deficits in the structure of the advisory offerings available to start-up entrepreneurs in Munich can only be brought to light with the aid of **feedback from the target group**. The same is true of obstacles to the launch of new businesses. For this reason, the expert group supported the **qualitative study** conducted within the framework of the AMIGA project, in which migrant entrepreneurs were interviewed. To develop the interview guidelines, the participants in the expert group forwarded questions to the target group. The findings of an analysis of eight guided interviews were presented to the expert group and revealed **reasons why people start businesses**, possible **obstacles** to the start-up process, and both the status of information available to respondents and their **need for support**:

- Most of the respondents are intrinsically motivated, i.e. they want to be independent and make use of their own strengths. No evidence was found to substantiate the widespread assumption that migrants mostly become self-employed because it is the only way in which they can find work in keeping with their qualifications.
- Most of the respondents launched businesses in the service sector. Typical or “cliché” start-ups such as restaurants and construction firms tended to be the exception in the cases analyzed.
- Some of the experts had had negative experience of events that were branded as being explicitly for migrants. Questions addressed to the target group nevertheless indicated that some of them would indeed accept this branding, provided that genuinely specific offerings were made available.
- The need for public funding and start-up funding was expressed rarely or not at all. That said, many interviewees were unaware of funding possibilities.

Most of the respondents were also still in a very early phase of the start-up process.

- Inadequate German language skills turned out to be the main obstacle to gathering information of relevance to business start-ups.
- The view of the respondents was that initial information should at least be available in English as well as in German.
- Systemic knowledge was lacking in many cases: *“I thought everything was the same in the EU.”* The expert group identified this point as one of the principal deficits.
- There was also a lack of knowledge of Germany’s business culture and cultural habits.
- *“A maze of authorities”*: Most migrant entrepreneurs do not know which authority is responsible for what. The target group is unable to cope on this point. The ideal solution would be a one-stop agency where all formalities could be processed, or that could at least coordinate all necessary activities involved in starting a business.
- The information available on the Internet is likewise perceived as unclear and confusing. There are too many sites dealing with the topic of self-employment but, in some cases, providing contradictory statements. Again, a one-stop platform could be a possible solution.
- The respondents were unaware of many institutions and their offerings. Examples include the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria (IHM), the Service Center for International Professionals at the Department of Public Order, the Munich Business Start-Up Office (MEB) and the JobCenter. Local service offerings must therefore be communicated more forcefully within the relevant networks.

In order to validate the expert group’s findings among the target group, one individual each from the target group was invited to some of the meetings, in addition to the interviews conducted. The focus at these meetings was on the person’s practical experience of starting a business. Guided questions included *“Where did you encounter problems? Where were you uncertain? What (institutional) support services did you make use of? What offerings for entrepreneurs with a migration background may be lacking? How can the way the target group is reached by improved? Does it even make sense to address the target group in isolation?”*

The invited guests themselves had not made use of any institutional service offerings, partly because they were unaware of them and partly because they felt no need to use them. Accordingly, they did not actively seek support services. The only source of information for the respondents was their circle of friends. It is to be assumed that institutional service offerings were also unknown to this circle of friends (as recommendations were not passed on), or that existing offerings are not aligned with the needs of the target group.

The opinions of the target group on the subject of **branding** vary very considerably – a view confirmed by the statements of the guests invited to the expert group

meetings and by other network events. Groups of individuals from certain countries of origin prefer to be perceived as migrants and also want to be addressed as such. Others have a different attitude and are not concerned about whether special offerings are available specifically for migrants. For them, the important thing is to have information available in English. Most of these migrants do not expect information to be available in their mother tongue, whereas other migrant entrepreneurs do indeed prefer information in their native language. They also often search for information on the Internet in their own language or in English.

Some migrants do not take advantage of existing offerings because they think that the services are only intended for German nationals, whereas they see themselves as foreigners or migrants. This is often the case for people who have only been in Germany for perhaps two to three years. Foreign nationals who have just arrived in Germany and want to start a business willingly follow the example of other (successful) start-up entrepreneurs with a migration background. For them, it is a source of tremendous motivation to see that “even” migrants can successfully develop their own business in Germany. These positive stories need to be told and communicated via different information channels.

The interviews and what guests said about their experience made it clear where specific needs exist. At the same time, an awareness of potential obstacles in the start-up process was only triggered by the questions asked. It is thus fair to say that the target group is too unaware of these issues and does not even perceive existing obstacles in some cases. This situation requires even greater support and instruction from public organizations and institutions.

**Specific activities already implemented** in the AMIGA project to improve information and networking for the target group include seminars for migrants who are planning to go self-employed and network events based on the “Networking networkers” event.

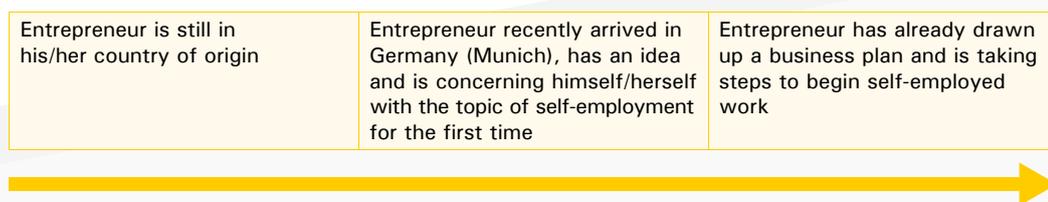
Developed jointly by the project managers and start-up experts, the AMIGA seminars entitled “The road to self-employment” were based on an existing information event for entrepreneurs held by the Munich Business Start-Up Office (MEB) and were adjusted for the target group. For example, the topic of aliens law was added to one seminar to emphasize the legal conditions and requirements specific to third-country nationals. The section on aliens law was handled by an employee of Munich’s Department of Public Order. The event was well attended (by about 25 people). Like the seminars that preceded it, it can be regarded as a success. This event confirmed that the target group does have a special need for a basic seminar on starting a business that is tailored to their own requirements.

Various distribution lists maintained by members of the expert group were used to invite people to the “Networking networkers” event. The main objective was to engage in dialogue with representatives of migrants’ organizations and to discuss both the “need” for special service offerings for migrant entrepreneurs and the

nature of this need. Dialogue and discussions at this networking event and within the expert group showed that many support services are often unknown to the individual institutions that serve start-up entrepreneurs. Existing offerings require greater or better visibility. In this context, it is vitally important to understand that migrant entrepreneurs constitute a heterogeneous target group. It should therefore be noted that there is no one concept that is “right” for everyone! A wide range of preferences regarding how they are to be addressed and what offerings they would like exists within the target group.

Both the interviews with migrant entrepreneurs and the results of the group work confirm two specific requirements: to further adapt existing conditions to the target group(s), and to develop specific new advisory services. Industry-specific aspects in particular need to be incorporated. Above all, there is a need to open the door to industry networks. One possible approach would be to use the services of agents known as “community managers”: self-employed migrants who are already well connected in a given industry.

Since existing offerings are often overlooked or unknown, and since the target group is very heterogeneous, there is a need to rethink the communication strategies and information channels used in the past. This could constitute an initial approach to more successfully communicating existing offerings to the target group and thereby increasing demand. The nature of service offerings and the way they are communicated depends heavily on the phase of the start-up process that the entrepreneur has currently reached. The expert group identified three relevant phases:



**Figure 6: Three-phase model: Communication strategy for entrepreneurs with a migration background; based on an idea by Alexander Vatovac**

In each of these three phases, entrepreneurs need different information, and they need it in different ways. The recommendations for action cataloged in chapter 5 explain the information model that was developed in light of the three phases identified by the expert group.

Given the very heterogeneous information habits of the migrant entrepreneur target group, it should also be investigated how the individual migrant communities can be addressed in order to reach them more effectively. It has proved useful to actively involve representatives of these communities in the planning and advertising of service offerings. In addition, basic information about starting a business in Germany should at least be available in English.

There are also some common factors in the way the target group looks for information, however. Many migrant entrepreneurs search for information in their native language or on known and familiar websites in their country of origin. From an institutional perspective, it is therefore advisable to work together with representatives of the individual countries of origin (multipliers, consulates, chambers of commerce etc.) to prepare suitable information and publish it on these websites.

The need to simplify processes and information sourcing emerged as a key topic. For foreign nationals, the “German system” – from registering as self-employed to the distinction between launching a company and going free-lance to the choice of legal form – is often far too opaque. As a rule, migrant entrepreneurs do not know the system of “how Germany works”. It follows that target-group-specific information should concentrate on what makes starting a business different in Germany to the same practice in the migrant’s home country. To this end, closer collaboration with consulates, multipliers and business representatives should be targeted.

Migrant entrepreneurs are also confused by the large number of authorities that they have to contact in the framework of the start-up process. Many would therefore prefer to see a single one-stop agency.

The recommendations for action derived from the expert group meetings, the findings of the qualitative study and the feedback from the target group are listed in chapter 5.

## Summary of the findings of the empirical study

*Isabella Waibel*

The empirical study focused on migrants who, as qualified workers, came to Munich no more than five years ago to seek to join the local labor market or start their own business. The study combined quantitative and qualitative survey methods by blending qualitative individual questions (in guided interviews) with standardized questions. The guided interviews were designed individually as a data collection instrument for each target group, whereas the standardized questions were identical for both groups. The interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Along the lines of Jaeggi et al. (1998), the data was evaluated interpretatively in a slightly modified form. Eight guided interviews for either target group formed the data basis.

The study focused on the following questions:

- What is the job situation of qualified migrants who only recently moved to Munich from abroad?
- What are the respondents’ motives, what career goals do they have – including starting their own business – and what do they need in order to realize these goals?
- What has been their experience of the local (Munich) labor market and/or of starting a business to date?

- What support services are they aware of and how do they rate these services?
- What demand exists for advisory services and support activities?

In light of these questions, it was held to be important to interview individuals from different vocational/professional groups and of different origins, including EU and third-country citizens. Since the questions were answered subjectively and, in some cases, retrospectively, individuals were selected who arrived in Munich from abroad no more than five years ago. The sample selection also took account of various socioeconomic attributes such as differences in age and gender, different sociodemographic attributes and the individual's residence status and period of residence in Germany.

The vocations and professions learned by the individuals in **target group 1** largely correspond to the qualifications that are currently in strong demand in Germany and can be assigned to the following industries: mechanical engineering, architecture, law, psychology, finance and industrial engineering. Experience shows that respondents with MINT qualifications rate their career prospects more highly than respondents from disciplines in the humanities. This target group primarily used the Internet to look for jobs, although this channel was very often complemented by friends and acquaintances ("word of mouth").

Despite having their foreign educational certificates recognized, it took at least a year for the majority of the respondents to be invited for a first job interview. Many expressed the desire for potential employers to state the reasons for rejections. The study also found that non-EU citizens feel that they enjoy fewer privileges and that companies are more reserved toward them during job interviews. The job-seeking migrants interviewed called in particular for support activities and events in the field of application training. Their perception is that hardly any such offers line up with the needs of the target group.

Similar to these job-seeking individuals, migrant entrepreneurs (**target group 3**) likewise exhibit strong demand for support services – especially in relation to the formalities of starting a business, as well as customary business practices, financial assistance, the choice of legal form and tax issues. Specific support structures should be set up and existing ones optimized for this group in the following areas: business start-up advice, mentoring programs and networking meetings, including meetings with successful entrepreneurs with a migration background.

The respondents gave a very positive assessment of the physical infrastructure in Munich, which is crucial to their motivation to start a business and their desire to stay in Munich. Local service offerings for potential entrepreneurs have been largely unknown up to now, so little use has been made of them as individuals took the plunge into self-employment. When assessing these findings, however, it should be remembered that the respondent group was still in the early stages of launching a business.

The results of the empirical data material for the first time document the experience and needs of qualified migrants as they seek to become integrated in the labor market or to start a business in Munich. Both target groups were typically very motivated to find work, evidenced a wealth of career experience and possessed a (very) good command of German. The findings are indicative of the wealth of skills and potential that the respondents can contribute, but that are not yet being put to sufficiently good use in Germany.

The possibility of taking up work or the desire to launch a business were the decisive factors for those who chose Munich as their place of residence. On the whole, Munich is perceived as a “city of unlimited possibilities”.

The obstacles identified for both groups can tend to be described as migrant-specific. The challenges mentioned (based on migrants’ own perceptions) included inadequate German language skills and resultant difficulties in realizing their career goals. Irrespective of industry and residence status, there is also a considerable perceived need for information to help migrants (better) understand the “German system”, i.e. “how things work in Germany”.

The interviews with both target groups provided no evidence of origin-specific disadvantages or discrimination in contact with institutions. On the other hand, the findings do reveal a significant discrepancy between the supply of and demand for support services across the two groups. The framework conditions and existing advisory services need to be (more) closely aligned with the individual needs of Munich’s new migrants and their level of qualifications.

## How AMIGA reaches out

### Poznań: Street work

*Natalia Bloch/Izabella Main*

Right from the beginning of the AMIGA project, street work was considered to be an extremely important element. It involved reaching out to migrant communities, promoting AMIGA's activities among them, assisting foreign nationals as they visited different institutions and helping to build networks by organizing space for the integration of 'hosts and guests' in Poznań (at monthly picnics, for example). These activities were carried out by a team of graduates in cultural anthropology who had already taken part in previous CeBaM AMU and IEiAK AMU research projects on migration phenomena in Poznań, and who also conducted their own research among foreign nationals living in Poznań in the course of their MA studies.<sup>2</sup>

In the initial phase of the project, it was essential **to gain access to foreign nationals** and supply them with information about our support services. The street workers made good use of the trust they had already built up during past activities, as well as mobilizing their network of contacts with people from different walks of life: workers at Turkish restaurants and fast food bars, Russian-speaking students who met within own association, and foreign nationals trading in the bazaars of Poznań.

We created **a list of the institutions** that migrants can contact for help. The list included not only obvious places such as the Department of Civil Affairs and Foreign Nationals at the Wielkopolska Voivodship Office in Poznań, which oversees the legalization of residence and work, but also the universities that educate foreign students, the Department of Civil Affairs at Poznań City Hall and the National Health Fund. It also included details of places where foreign nationals typically meet, be they religious institutions (such as the Muslim Cultural Educational Center, the Orthodox church and the International Church of Poznań), social institutions (pubs, restaurants and coffee shops etc.) or virtual meeting places (various Facebook groups for foreign nationals living in Poznań).

The street workers talked to foreign nationals and left leaflets and posters about the activities of the MIP in many places. Newly opened or discovered institutions were constantly added to the list. As a result, many people who visited the MIP had learned about us at the District Employment Office, while the universities that educate foreign students also disseminated information about our offerings.

What were known as "orientation days" were another important way to contact foreign nationals and promote AMIGA's activities. Orientation days were meetings held at Poznań universities that introduced foreign students to various formal and practical aspects of life in Poland (such as the system of study, how to legalize one's residence in Poland, health insurance and looking for accommodation). These meetings are organized at the beginning of each academic year. After the representatives of various local government offices had made their presentations



Team of street workers in Poznań

at these orientation days, the AMIGA street workers outlined their offerings and encouraged foreign nationals to take advantage of them. In the weeks that followed, we were able to observe an influx of students from different universities to the MIP office.

In the months that followed, street workers repeatedly returned to the places where foreign nationals study, work or spend their leisure time to keep them informed about the project. An MIP Facebook page, run by the street workers, began to play an important role in promoting AMIGA's activities. This page posted information about all current events (not only those organized by AMIGA) relating to the life and needs of migrants in Poznań. At the end of 2014, a newsletter was also created and regularly circulated to foreign nationals and other project participants.

We also took part in **the workshops on starting a business**. These workshops were planned as part of the AMIGA project and delivered by the Training/Advisory Center at the Business and Agriculture Department of Poznań City Hall. This experience gave the street workers a basic knowledge of formal aspects that are important for foreign nationals who run their own business in Poland. It also helped them get to know the other workshop participants and, where appropriate, support them in the process of launching a business.

One very important aspect of street work involved serving as interpreters and cultural assistants to help foreign nationals on their visits to local government offices and institutions. On many occasions, the difficulties encountered by foreign nationals resulted not only from their poor command of Polish (and the lack of knowledge of foreign languages among the employees of different local government offices and institutions), but also from an insufficient understanding of the Polish legal, administrative and educational systems etc. In problematic situations, the assistance provided also involved direct support for migrants, discussing their case with lawyers and experts from other associations that supported the street workers, consulting with local government officials (within a network of contacts containing a list of specific individuals who deal with the foreign nationals' affairs at the various institutions that were aware of the AMIGA project), handling electronic correspondence and making phone calls, as well as the activities undertaken at the MIP and on Facebook.

Several examples of situations in which migrants turning to street workers for help are documented below. They clearly illustrate both the multidimensionality and the importance of the assistance provided.

- **Agata Pakieła: Providing support to legalize Lena's and Nasir's stay<sup>3</sup>**

*Many of the problems street workers dealt with related to legalizing people's residence in Poland. Often, migrants asked for help only the day before their appointment at the local government office where they were supposed to present their documents, so the street workers had to be flexible and respond swiftly. One of the most interesting cases regarding the legalization of residence was that of Lena, a Ukrainian citizen, who came to Poland on a visa. After numerous official consultations, she was told that she should apply for a temporary residence permit (in spite of the fact that some of her family members were EU citizens). She followed this advice, but some time later received an official letter stating that, in light of the reasons she had cited in her application letter (her intention to live with her family), she should apply for a residence permit for the family member of an EU citizen. She experienced difficulties preparing the proper documents and had, in any case, now received her temporary residence permit. She asked me to go with her to the local government office and help her sort the matter out. After making some phone calls, I realized that each case is taken care of by a different person, which presented an obstacle to coherent decisions. Moreover, due to mistakes in the postal address, Lena had not received the authority's decision about her temporary residence permit and the final date by which to submit a letter of appeal was rapidly approaching. We decided that I would help her to write this letter. Lena showed me the text she had prepared earlier in Polish. Since she did not speak Polish, she had first written it in English and then translated it into Polish with the help of an Internet translation machine. After we had made some changes to the text, we went to the local government office. Lena talked to the officials in English and did very well. I was present during the conversation, but I tried not to speak on Lena's behalf. My conclusion was that, in such situations, what migrants need most is psychological support: They simply feel safer and more confident when accompanied by a person they know.*

*When Lena went to pick up the residence permit, further problems arose. It turned out that, although she had been granted the permit, she could not obtain the card. After making numerous phone calls (both to the local government in Poznań and to the Bureau of Information Technology for Foreign Nationals in Warsaw), we discovered that the longer time taken to issue the card was caused by technical problems with the system that generates the documents. This made me realize the difficulties migrants encounter in such situations. Lena spoke a little Polish, so she was in a slightly better position. Yet somebody who speaks only a foreign language would not be able to get any information at all. I was also astonished by the fact that, although the local government office was responsible for the delay, no explanations were provided. Instead, we were sent from one person and one institution to another.*

*It should be noted that such cases did not usually end with us giving support in only one specific situation. In the course of our following meetings and as we established a closer relationship, I helped Lena to find a flat and a job. I also showed her opportunities to participate in the social and cultural life of Poznań. At the same time, Lena also took advantage of different forms of support offered by the MIP, such as attending a Polish language course and taking part in the workshops on starting a business. She also met with a job advisor. Lena was actively involved in international picnics and integration meetings. Over time, it became clear that she was handling different aspects of living in Poznań with greater ease. Her Polish became more fluent and she was able to deal with various problems on her own. As a result, our contacts are currently more of a social nature.*

*Our street work also confronted us with problems that were more time-consuming and required cooperation with other organizations providing support to migrants. One good example is the case of Nasir, a Moroccan national who came to Poland a few years ago to study. A lack of sufficient financial means forced him to abandon his studies, however, after which his stay in Poland became illegal. Nasir applied for a residence permit for a fixed period of time due to his relationship with a Polish girl, but he was turned down. At the same time, he was subjected to controls at his workplace, where he was working illegally. He appealed against a decision to deny him a residence permit but was unsuccessful.*

*As a result, Nasir decided to return to his country of origin, although at the same time he had some concerns about doing so. On the one hand, he stressed his relationships with Poland and the fact that he felt "more Polish than Moroccan" (he also had doubts about whether he would feel at home in Morocco as he had become accustomed to the Polish lifestyle). On the other hand, he wanted to clarify the questions relating to his legal situation so that he could start leading normal life in Poland. The case of Nasir required analysis of numerous documents and consultations with the Wielkopolska Voivodship Office in Poznań. Nasir was well aware of his rights, read the relevant laws and found a way to cover his travel costs under the 'Voluntary Returns' program offered by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). He was, however, concerned that he might not be allowed to re-enter Poland. After consulting with the Border Guard Office, though, it turned out that it was possible to apply for the ban to be canceled. In the meantime, Nasir's financial, health and housing situation had become extremely complicated. We therefore tried to consult the IOM and submit a document to the Voivodship Office, confirming that Nasir wanted to return to his country of origin as soon as possible and of his own free will. In such instances, it can take some time before a decision is reached. In this case, however, the local government officials issued it very quickly. The IOM staff could then start organizing Nasir's return, so he left Poland within a week. Having returned to Morocco, he applied for annulation of his re-entry ban to Poland.*

*During our numerous meetings, Nasir often talked about a sense of injustice stemming from the fact that Poles can go on holiday to Morocco, but Moroccans need a visa even if they want to come to Poland for only a short period of time. He stressed that he is always questioned at the airport about the details and purpose of his stay in Poland, while Europeans are not asked any questions. He also spoke of his feelings about the way he was received in Poznań. His impression was that he was labeled as an 'Arab' both at local government offices and on the street. It annoyed him that people perceived him as a Moroccan and treated him as a potential terrorist instead of seeing how similar to other Poles he had become (speaking Polish and dressing and behaving like Poles). One should add, however, that he had a circle of close friends who supported him.*

- **Agata Kochaniewicz: Support during a court case**

*One of the more unusual tasks I encountered in my street work was the need to monitor the court case of a Mexican by the name of Jorge. The case was to rule on alimony for his son, whose mother was Polish. When Jorge came to the MIP, his lawsuit had dragged on for over two years; almost 20 hearings had taken place. I attended two of them, as well as in the session at which the verdict was announced.*

*Jorge claimed that the judge who conducted the trial was discriminating against him based on his ethnic origin and was ignoring his arguments. There were two reasons why he asked me to accompany him to the hearings. First, he needed an interpreter to communicate with his attorney. Jorge speaks English and Spanish, but his attorney speaks neither of these languages. Second, as he had many reservations about the way the judge was behaving, he wanted me to watch how she conducted the trial. We met with the attorney, who introduced me to the case before the first hearing. According to Jorge and the attorney, the judge had sided with mother of the child from the very start. Nor did she spare him malicious comments and suggestions that Jorge was a well-to-do person. She did not want to believe that he was unemployed and that he lived on credit, paying off one credit card with another. Since the financial and economic crisis, this has become a common way to live – especially in the USA, where Jorge lived for many years. Nevertheless, the judge's frequent allusions to the fact that Jorge had an American passport was apparently supposed to prove his high economic status.*

*During the trial, it turned out that the judge was prejudiced against foreign nationals who were party to the case. When the question of the attorney's authorization to pick up judicial documents on Jorge's behalf emerged, the judge made a mocking comment that, if Jorge spent so much time traveling around exotic countries, he could also visit Poland to pick up his letters on a regular basis. The "traveling accusation" appeared several times when the question of the amount of alimony was raised. The judge did not understand one crucial aspect related to the a non-EU national's stay in Poland: As a citizen of Mexico entitled to visa-free travel, Jorge could stay legally in Poland for three months only. To legally*

*prolong his stay, he therefore had to leave the country and visit a non-EU country every three months. He chose the Ukraine as it was the closest and cheapest non-EU country. This procedure enabled him to legally stay in Poland, as he had no basis on which to apply for a residence permit for a fixed period of time.*

*Another example of discrimination occurred when a sworn interpreter accompanying Jorge had to leave the court room at some point in order to prolong his parking ticket and the judge decided to continue the proceedings without him. As a result, Jorge did not understand the discussion taking place during the interpreter's absence. Yet another manifestation of the judge's negative attitude toward Jorge was when she accused him of lying when he was not able to recall the last name of his landlord. It seemed that the judge did not take into account the fact that many foreign nationals have difficulty memorizing Polish names.*

*Unfortunately, most Polish trials are not recorded, and judges instruct the typists to write down only certain general agreements. The judge's malicious comments and lack of sensitivity to the difficult situation of migrants in Poland were not recorded in any way. There is also no record of the judge making faces when Jorge tried to explain a foreign national's difficulty finding a job in Poland. If Jorge were to make a complaint, the only proof would therefore be witnesses' testimonies. As the judge deemed the presence of a sworn interpreter to be unnecessary, I accompanied Jorge as his interpreter when the final verdict was announced. After two years of lawsuits, the foreign national was not given the opportunity to even understand the verdict. After the case had been closed, the attorney decided to lodge a complaint about the biased attitude of the judge. I will stand as a witness in this case should the need arise. Jorge himself was very grateful that I accompanied him during the hearings. Unfortunately, he also felt that he was not treated fairly, as his arguments and proofs were disregarded. According to him, if he was a Pole, the judge's attitude would be different.*

- **Robert Rydzewski: Support for a migrant starting a business**

*One very good example illustrating the multidimensional nature of street work within the AMIGA project is the case of a young Spaniard, Juan, who wanted to set up a business in Poznań. This budding entrepreneur decided to settle down in Poland as he had very good memories of Poznań from the time he had spent studying here on the Erasmus exchange program in 2009/2010. After three years back home, he therefore returned to Poland. His experience during his first stay in Poland made him see the Polish market as much more absorptive than Western European markets. He believed that running his own business would enable him to enjoy a high standard of living. The ongoing financial crisis in Spain was another factor that prompted him to move to a country so far removed from his home land. In September 2014, Juan thus opened a Spanish language school where language was taught using an innovative method – by playing basketball. The support I gave to Juan began much earlier.*

*Juan arrived at the MIP in March 2014 in order to enroll in a workshop entitled "Step by step to starting a business in Poland". He also signed up for a Polish language course. From that time on we remained in permanent contact – either in person or via e-mails and phone calls – for twelve months or so. During our meetings at informal venues such as coffee shops, pubs and bars, I listened to his ideas about business and suggested organizations, institutions and local government offices that could help him to draw up a business plan, acquire funds, plan promotional activities, optimize the tax structure of his business and, ultimately, register the firm.*

*During his visits to the Center for Entrepreneurship in Poznań, I played the role of interpreter from Spanish to Polish. I also helped Juan contact some offices by phone. The role of interpreter was very important: First of all, few people at organizations, institutions and government offices that do not specifically serve foreign nationals are able to communicate either in English or in other languages spoken by migrants. Second, not all migrants can speak English; and even those that do may not be fluent enough to understand the intricacies of the Polish tax law system, for instance.*

*I supported Juan by providing him with information, answering questions and putting him in touch with people with the right skills and competencies. Some of the particular difficulties he faced may seem trivial to natives of Poznań, including the topography of the city, estimating the time it takes to get from one place to another, the class structure in particular districts of the city, the education system, the location of primary schools and the "unwritten rules" of running a business. This kind of knowledge is acquired by actively participating in the life of the city. Naturally, however, people coming from other countries do not yet have this experience.*

*Another form of support that seems trivial but was very much appreciated by Juan were the meetings that allowed him to formulate his ideas on business, tell me about them and reflect on them. On these occasions, I mostly just listened, sometimes asking him questions that he needed to answer for himself. We met whenever Juan felt the need to talk, partly due to the lack of somebody he could trust and talk to about his concerns about setting up a business within his circle of relatives and friends. The process of establishing the language school took about twelve months, during which time we also met about a dozen times.*

*I also helped him to prepare the room for classes, and was there during classes as well. Although this kind of support often had to do with the need for longer (several-hour) trips out of Poznań, both Juan and I needed it. Juan got the support he very much needed, and I as a street worker had an opportunity to see what kind of problems first-time businessmen struggle with in practice. For instance, I supported him as he negotiated rental terms for classrooms with the management of schools. I also helped him with different tasks that required various skills (such as fixing basketballs and checking promotional and educational*

materials and their language content). Whenever there was a language barrier, I also mediated in his interaction with parents.

Providing support to a new migrant entrepreneur involved various tasks and was often time-consuming. It required legal expertise, business knowledge and marketing skills that would really have needed the involvement of a group of suitably qualified individuals. Another very significant factor was the ability to provide psychological support and simply be there as a person the migrant entrepreneur could trust.

- **Izabela Czerniejewska: Support related to nursery education**

After finding information published on Facebook by a migrant whose son was removed from nursery because he didn't speak Polish, I sent her some information about the Migrant Info Point and also offered to talk to her if she wanted to. At that time, Facebook was full of different advice about the case. Parents were advised to contact the media, some comments condemned the incident as discriminatory practice, and so on. The name of woman is Manuela. She comes from Venezuela and is married to a Pole. They lived in Poznań for seven years, they both work and their son started attending nursery last year. As the case seemed to be rather complicated, we met at the MIP to get to know each other and spell out our expectations about how this problem could be resolved. Our first meeting lasted over an hour. We talked about the difficult situation her family found itself in and about possible solutions. The parents decided that they no longer wanted their son to attend the kindergarten from which he had been removed, even if there might have been a chance of doing so after the director withdrew her decision. Another concern, however, was how to find a place at a public nursery at the end of November (as children are typically admitted to nurseries in the spring). Franek, the boy, is four and a half years old. He was born in Poland, his mother speaks to him in Spanish and his father in Polish. The parents communicate with each other in English.

The story of the boy and his nursery education is as follows. In September 2013, Franek started to attend one of the public nurseries in Poznań. At the start, the parents were concerned whether he would manage and often asked the preschool teachers how he was doing, but nobody reported any problems. Yet the mother of the child felt that the nursery director did not like her, as she kept saying: "You live in Poland and you should speak Polish." The director clearly believed that the parents should speak Polish to the child. In September 2014, after a one-month holiday which Franek spent with his parents in Spain, he came back to the nursery. At first, the preschool teacher simply said that he had forgotten many of the words he had learned in the previous year. Later on, however, no further information was provided on his progress or lack of it. Several times, when Franek's parents came to pick him up, they found him in a group of younger children. Yet nobody explained the reason for this switch to them.

*At the end of November, completely unexpectedly for the parents, the director informed the father that they should remove their son from the nursery. One other person – a teacher taking care of another group – witnessed this encounter. She explained that the child was not making any progress in learning Polish, and that the other children were therefore rejecting him as they did not understand him. She then also explained the reason why Franek had been put in another group: This, she said, was the way the teachers had wanted to check whether younger children would understand him. The director did say that the boy could stay at the nursery until his parents could find a bilingual kindergarten, suggesting that she was doing them a favor for which they should be grateful. The parents asked the director to justify her decision in written form. In the days that followed, the atmosphere at the nursery became increasingly unpleasant. Franek did not feel safe there and refused to go to the nursery. It became obvious that he would never come back.*

*After my first meeting with Manuela, I had an opportunity to meet the whole family at a picnic organized by the MIP. Franek was speaking fast and not very clearly. He was mixing languages and was very active. We talked to his parents about what to do next. The first task was to find a new nursery, as his parents did not want to send him to a private English-speaking nursery. We managed to help them find a vacancy at a nearby nursery. Franek started to attend the new nursery, where neither the director nor the preschool teachers considered his bilingualism to be a problem. Within a week, the boy had adapted to his new surroundings and his parents had stopped worrying about him. Talking to Manuela, I came back to the question of discrimination at the previous nursery. Both parents were unanimous that they did not want to leave the case at that.*

*I contacted the regional Education Office in Poznań, where I was told how to lodge a formal complaint in which the parents could express their discontent with the situation described above. With my help, Manuela thus wrote a letter of complaint. One of the things she wrote was that the “behavior of nursery teachers indicated discriminatory practices and was not in accordance with Polish law”. To provide institutional support to Manuela’s complaint, we decided that, in my capacity as a representative of the MIP, I should also send her letter to the Education Office. In reply to this letter, I received an e-mail from the school superintendent, informing me that an investigation would be conducted at the nursery.*

*In the meantime, Manuela and her husband gave an interview that was published in the web edition of a local newspaper, as well as a short video that was broadcast on local TV. The result was twofold. On the one hand, the affair was publicized, and both statements by the nursery director and comments from the Education Office were recorded. Yet a negative aspect also came to light: Below the article, many comments proved that netizens showed little understanding of the problem. The parents were surprised by the reactions and unfavorable attitude of the average reader. Such reactions reveal an intolerance toward any*

*kind of difference in Polish society – even if that “difference” is only a little boy speaking several languages (imperfectly).*

*One innovative element of the AMIGA project was to integrate fieldwork activities in our street work, i.e. to combine activities performed on behalf of migrants with research into integration processes. Doing street work gave us a tremendous opportunity to support foreign nationals in their daily struggles. It also enabled us to employ a method of participant observation that seems to be rarely applied in research on migration phenomena, which is usually narrowed down to standard questionnaire-guided interviews.*

At the same time, participant observation – though time-consuming and requiring a high level of fieldwork skills – enabled the team to acquire more multidimensional and well-rounded picture, for instance by comparing what people say with what they do. We found that interviews often trigger unpleasant associations, particularly among migrants who are having problems legalizing their stay. We therefore replaced interviews with more informal but in-depth conversations conducted in a friendly, informal setting. For the foreign nationals with whom we were working, it was important that they did not feel they were being assessed, that street workers tried to employ non-evaluative approaches even to practices that often are not socially accepted, such as homelessness and working without a valid permit. The sensitivity of street workers (anthropologists by education) to questions regarding the subjectivity and agency of the people we worked with in the field turned out to be very helpful in this regard.

The fact that the street workers had something concrete to offer migrants enabled long-term relationships to take root. This in turn enabled us to monitor the results of the support provided not just once, but also over the long term. On the one hand, this allowed us to grasp that integration is a process and to apply action research methods based on the research-action-evaluation model (where our activities undertaken on the basis of previous research outcomes were subjected to constant evaluation in order to validate them). For the street workers themselves, it was also important to be able to practice the rule of reciprocity: “I was not just some weird researcher who comes along and wants who knows what. We were giving something back, we were contributing something. It was not one-sided. That is how I understand engaged anthropology. As a result, we felt that we earned the respect of these people.” (Agata Kochaniewicz, street worker). However, we were very careful to ensure that the migrants remained self-reliant, as we did not want our assistance to relieve them of their own responsibilities. Our goal was to make migrants aware that they have to take action and that they are responsible for those actions. We stressed that our task was to support and not to provide aid, as the term aid turns the one who being aided into a victim who is incapable of acting independently. Conversely, the person providing the aid becomes somebody who “knows what is best for the victim”. This would merely have reinforced a paternalistic and patronizing structure.

The biggest challenge to the street workers turned out to be the blurred and unclear line between “still a client” and “already an acquaintance”, between private life and fieldwork. To a large extent, this dilemma was inherent in the flexible nature of street work that often necessitated ad hoc interventions. The virtual aspect of our work – our presence on Facebook in particular – likewise blurred the same distinction. In effect, providing street workers with business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and business cards with working hours turned out to be useless.

Moreover, in the relatively small urban space that is Poznań, the paths of street workers and foreign nationals often crossed in other areas of life, too. Having said that, this type of fieldwork requires deep immersion in the world under investigation. It necessitates a measure of intimacy in relationships with those who have become our research partners. The same challenges apply equally to anthropological work done at home, where field and home are not separated from each other by any physical or geographical lines. Lastly, engaged anthropology compels researchers to reflect on where their engagement should end to prevent them from losing themselves in their “work”.

In some cases, migrants tried to get street workers to do things for them not out of any ill will, but for instance because of a desire to show, say, a Polish girlfriend that they were able to get things done without her help – “to be a man and save face”, in other words (Robert Rydzewski, street worker). In some cases, the street workers themselves pushed the boundaries of engagement by finding migrants somewhere to live or giving them small gifts (albeit always clandestinely). In some situations they had a close relationship with migrants and in others they felt helpless – as in the case of a homeless man from Ukraine. Street worker Agata Pakieła describes her attempts to support this particular individual as follows: “As usually, I felt as if I was hitting the wall and trying to fix who knows what (...). I felt a little bit helpless in this situation. I could not fix a job or lodgings for a longer time [at best one night, two nights, and even then only thanks to connections]. I got the impression that we can give support to people who are in a reasonably stable situation, but that people like Anatolij who were in really difficult situations had to go away empty-handed”.

All the street workers unanimously agreed that this work involves a tremendous emotional and psychological burden. “I lacked psychological training. I was not prepared for some stories, and sometimes it was really difficult. I did not know what to do with them, how to handle it.” (Agata Kochaniewicz, street worker). Our project lacked supervision that would have helped the street workers to resolve difficult situations. One such situation was the case of Felix, who became unable to work when he was diagnosed with bowel cancer. Felix wanted to return home to Kenya, as he believed that this would help him to recover. The street workers engaged in various activities to raise money to cover his travel and treatment expenses. Felix left Poland in June; he died in December.

Street work was a vital part of the AMIGA project. Reaching out to migrant communities and informing them about the support we could offer was very important,



Team of scouting campaign in Munich

as was networking and the need to accompany foreign nationals to various institutions. Thanks to these activities, our knowledge about the ways migrants function in different parts of the city has improved. We also gained an insight into the dynamics of their contacts with different institutions (nurseries, courts, regional and local government offices, business incubators, universities, dormitories etc.). This enabled us not only to prepare more complete sets of information for the next groups of migrants, but also to suggest activities that would help institutions improve the way they work in the context of contact with migrants.

### Munich: Scouting campaign

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz*

The AMIGA team adopted a variety of approaches to reach out to the project's target groups and recruit participants. One channel was provided by network contacts with cooperation partners in the expert groups. Here, the AMIGA project was able to reach out to the target groups by communicating AMIGA's activities and offerings via these network partners. The next step was for these institutions and advisory services to pass on potential participants to the AMIGA project management team. When inquiries and registrations were received, the team worked together with participants to identify what activities would be best suited to meet the needs of each participant. The successful delivery of seminars, carefully targeted approaches to the target groups and individual advice enabled AMIGA to continually widen its scope in the course of the project. Potential participants and future mentors learned about the project via indirect and informal networks (secondary and tertiary contacts and word of mouth).

**Information activities and press work** was another way in which AMIGA reached out to potential participants. Positioned on the City of Munich's portal, the AMIGA project website ([www.amiga-muenchen.de](http://www.amiga-muenchen.de)) provided details of labor market-related events and offerings in German and English. Information about both AMIGA's own events and those of other institutions and organizations in Munich was published and regularly updated. On request, registered participants received the AMIGA newsletter, cooperation partners' newsletters and the special AMIGA publications ("Extrablatt") by e-mail. The latter medium collected, edited and published informa-

tion on specific topics. One issue, for example, was dedicated to the topic of “Getting in shape for a job and the application process”.

The third main channel to communicate project information and the AMIGA offerings was the **scouting campaign**, whose innovative approach is explained in detail below.

The AMIGA scouting campaign in Munich began in September 2013. Three project staff members who themselves belonged to the project’s target groups (each devoting nine hours a week to the project) acted as scouts, communicating activities and offerings to the target groups, but also accompanying the work of the expert groups. They served as both mouthpiece and mediator between institutions on the one hand and migrants on the other.

	Career situation when scouting activities commenced	Country of origin
<b>Anna Davydova</b>	Studying for a master’s degree in intercultural communication at Ludwig Maximilians Universität Munich	Russia; had been in Germany for five years
<b>Ioanna Kinazidou</b>	Studying for a BA in social and educational policy in Greece, recognized as a social scientist	Greece; had been in Germany for one and half year
<b>Rong Wang</b>	Studying for a doctoral degree in modern German literature at Ludwig Maximilians Universität Munich	China; had been in Germany for seven years

Table 4: Qualifications of the AMIGA scouts

The scouts focused on two key areas of work. First, they focused **information and networking activities** of the scouting campaign gave migrants access to relevant information about the labor market and starting a business, how to take advantage of AMIGA’s offerings (seminars, mentoring programs, job fairs) and other support services available in Munich. Second, they assisted with the **empirical study**, initially by scouting for candidates for pre-testing and then by gathering their feedback on the pre-test. Moreover, it was their dedication and their networks that succeeded in identifying the final interview partners. In collaboration with the scientific support team and in consultation with the project leaders and project management team, the scouts conducted the qualitative interviews for the empirical study.

The scouts’ **information and networking activities** broke down into the following specific tasks:

- Reach out to and build networks across the three target groups with the aim of giving them access to necessary information about the labor market situation in Munich, starting a business, application procedures, residence law and development and training offerings available in the city

- Recruit project participants
- Cultivate and build bridges between the participants' networks
- Advertise AMIGA service offerings such as the mentoring program (MigMENT), seminars about topics of relevance to business start-ups and the labor market, and job fairs among the target groups
- Increase awareness of other local government service offerings of relevance to the target groups

Specifically, the project staff joined the experts and the project team in searching for and identifying relevant events in Munich. They then attended these events in order to contact the project's target group directly and deliver brief presentations to introduce AMIGA. Talking one-on-one to potential project participants, they passed on information, contact data and details of the service offerings available from Munich institutions, as well as informing migrants about AMIGA's own offerings.

Close contact with the project participants enabled the scouts to clarify the findings of the empirical study by producing reports of their experience in the field. They thus helped to build bridges between theory and practice. At the expert group meetings, the scouts submitted regular reports on the questions asked and problems faced by participants. This very practical knowledge was valuable to the experts in particular. Together with the expert groups and with due provision for the findings of the empirical study, the scouts drafted potential tools and models to efficiently meet the needs of the target group. For example, they came up with ways to make the flow of information more effective and efficient, to improve the extent to which information about service offerings and activities in Munich actually reach the target group.

Conversely, the expert groups provided the scouts with an important point of contact and source of information about service offerings of relevance to the target groups. To complement the presentation of service offerings and activities at the meetings of the expert groups, individual meetings were also arranged with the organizations represented by the various experts. These meetings were instrumental in cementing collaboration and network links between existing institutions and in updating the scouts' information about existing offerings. Details of the service offerings made available by the cooperation partners were regularly forwarded by the scouts to the target groups. Where necessary, contact was also established between project participants and the various experts. Given the fact that much information and many existing service offerings had not been reaching part or all of the target groups in the past, the scouts' intensive networking with providers was of great importance. Cooperating with the expert groups and external partners gave the scouts access to a broad spectrum of information, which in turn enabled them to provide active and effective support to project participants.

To **recruit project participants**, the scouts' work involved establishing contact with country groups, migrants' organizations and international student initiatives. The scouts were then able to forward project information and details of events to target

groups via these multipliers and their distribution lists. Internet-based recruiting activities focused primarily on social networks such as Facebook and XING, where events and information of relevance to the target groups were publicized.

In a newsletter, the scouts – working together with the project management – disseminated information about topics, points of contact and events of interest to the target groups. The content of the newsletter was grouped into thematic sections to appeal to qualified migrants, international graduates and students and migrant entrepreneurs. The AMIGA newsletter was circulated by e-mail once a month. Anyone who was interested could sign up to receive the newsletter when they attended AMIGA seminars, job fairs and project presentations or visited the project website.

To cultivate personal dialogue with the target groups, the scouts organized a monthly AMIGA social event (“Stammtisch”) once a month, on their own initiative. Project participants and anyone who was interested were invited to meet and talk to each other in an informal setting. In addition, every member of the scouting team was equipped with a mobile phone specifically for project use. At set times, project participants thus had the chance to contact the scouts and ask them questions directly.

**Supervision** for project participants was provided collaboratively by the project managers and the scouts. Mentees recruited by the scouts for the MigMENT mentoring program were supervised by the project managers. Close contact with project participants, animated discussions at the monthly social events and regular information updates laid a firm foundation of trust. The scouting team’s own multicultural background and multilingual capabilities in particular made it easier for them to gain access to and cultivate contact with the target groups. The people who staffed the scouting campaign and the project managers together covered a total of twelve languages: Chinese, English, French, German, Greek, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovakian, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish.

Best practices	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Multicultural team and multilingual capabilities</li> <li>● In-depth systemic knowledge and existing networks</li> <li>● Ability to build trust through close contact with participants</li> <li>● Intensive and regular dialogue with each other, the project team and the expert groups</li> <li>● Regular documentation to make sure valuable information was not lost: reports by expert group moderators, project managers and scouts</li> <li>● Responsibilities and the work of looking for participants were clearly assigned, but close internal communication kept everyone on top of every topic. This allowed the scouts to rotate their attendance at the expert groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scouts needed to be very flexible in attending appointments, as the expert groups met in the afternoons and seminars were held in the evenings (the scouts devoted nine hours a week to the project and all had other primary activities)</li> <li>● In some cases, close contact with participants – especially via social media led to the scouts being asked about all kinds of topics, even those that had nothing to do with the labor market</li> <li>● Gathering information necessitated visits to institutions and took much more time than was planned</li> </ul>

Table 5: Scouting campaign – Best practices and challenges

Cultural differences in the way people go about looking for and passing on information of relevance to the labor market are very significant in some cases. For this reason, the project participants found it extremely helpful that the AMIGA project in general and the scouting campaign in particular not only supplied them with information and details of offerings from the local government, but also gave them a chance to get to know Germany's consulting culture and learn how important – and indeed essential – it is to show initiative. In the future, this experience will help them find information for themselves about important topics. The scouting campaign thus proved to be a very valuable tool throughout the entire course of the project.

## Offers

### Poznań: Activities of the Migrant Info Point

*Izabela Czerniejewska/Izabella Main/Agata Pakieła*

Estimates indicate that at least 5,000 foreign nationals live in Poznań (at least 4,500 foreign nationals are known to have lived here in 2012). The qualitative research conducted in 2010 by CeBaM provided a comparatively up-to-date and detailed account of migrants' situation and the difficulties they face in their daily life in Poznań. The research singles out three specific obstacles as the most important ones: the lack of knowledge among the migrants of their rights, the lack of easy access to that knowledge and a sense of being deprived of any institutional aid. Migrants repeatedly pointed out that there is a need for just a single place where they could go to get information on legal, formal and practical issues in a language they can understand (Buchowski, Schmidt 2012; Bloch, Goździak 2010).

In response to their reported demands, **the Migrant Info Point (MIP) – an advice and information point for foreign nationals** – was opened in October 2013 within the framework of the AMIGA project. The MIP is open twice a week (on Tuesdays and Thursdays) for six hours at a time. The people working at the MIP graduated from the Faculty of Cultural Anthropology at Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU). During their studies, these individuals gained a thorough knowledge of different cultures and traditions; they have a keen interest in the current socioeconomic and political situations in Poland and in the world; they are open and sensitive to other people's experiences; and they engage in a wide range of social initiatives. Their professional preparation and social competences were of great importance to the MIP's activity.

During its first year in operation, the MIP was located in a small room on the first floor of one of the university buildings in Poznań's city center. The room was shared with people involved in various other projects, which seriously limited the time that could be devoted to AMIGA activities. On September 1, 2014, MIP therefore moved to new offices at the Centre for Migration Studies (CeBaM), which is also in the center of Poznań. The new location places three rooms at CeBaM's disposal, one of which is set aside for the MIP's activities. Moving to a new, more spacious office also gave rise to new ideas such as the possibility of organizing international meetings. In the new MIP office, favorable conditions for conversations were arranged. This is a very important consideration, as meetings with migrants can now take place without the presence of third parties. Various posters, information boards and announcements were hung on the walls. The shelves and tables contain numerous forms and leaflets relating not only to the AMIGA project and the MIP itself, but also to other relevant institutions and organizations.

#### ■ The MIP's offerings

The MIP provides advice on legalizing one's stay in Poland, job advice and information about practical aspects of daily life in Poland.



Impressions from AMIGA offers in Poznań

The MIP staff supplied visitors with information about what documents are needed to legalize a migrant's stay in Poland (visas, temporary residence permits, permanent residence permits etc.). They also helped migrants to fill out the various forms and explained how to apply for Polish citizenship, obtain a personal identification number (PESEL) or register as a resident. In more complicated legalization cases, the MIP staff also consulted over the phone with officials at the Department of Civil Affairs and Foreign Nationals in the Wielkopolska Voivodship Office in Poznań, or with the people at the Association of Legal Intervention in Warsaw.

On numerous occasions, it took several meetings and consultations with both the individual in question and an assortment of officials and lawyers to obtain full information about the best way to legalize a foreign national's stay. Before the MIP opened for business, its staff received special training from officials made available by the Wielkopolska Voivodship Office. This training covered the regulations on how to legalize the stay of different categories of foreign nationals. Due to major amendments to the Act on Foreign Nationals, which took effect on May 1, 2014, the MIP staff subsequently needed retraining with regard to the legal basis for the legalization of a migrant's stay.

**Example 1: An order to leave – and an attempt to solve the problem**

*One example of an attempt to solve a problem regarding the legalization of a stay was the case of an ethnic Kurd, a Turkish citizen who had been staying and working in Poland for over two years. He came to the MIP after being denied an extension to a temporary residence permit. He had then been ordered by the Wielkopolska Province Governor to leave the country. Several meetings were held at the MIP while his case was discussed with a lawyer who cooperates with the MIP and who helped to prepare letters of appeal. In spite of his good command of Polish language, the foreign national was not able to understand the documents he received, to grasp the intricacies of Polish law and to properly prepare an appeal. Indeed, anyone who has no educational background in law would probably face the same difficulty. After further contact with the MIP, the foreign national decided to leave Poland and then apply for a Polish visa in order to re-enter the country and work here.*

Figure 7a: Meetings at the MIP: example 1

**Example 2: Support to legalize the stay of a family from Ukraine**

*Due to the deteriorating political situation and the war in Ukraine, the number of people arriving in Poland and turning to the MIP for help has grown. The case of one family (a couple with a small child) serves as an example. The family came to Poland and initially settled down far from the city of Poznań, as they could count on the support of a family living there. In spite of the distance, they repeatedly came to the MIP for advice on matters relating to the legalization of their stay and to attend to all the necessary formalities, with the help of the MIP staff. Since the husband and the child were of Polish origin, they were both granted permanent residence permits. The wife started the process of applying for a temporary residence permit shortly before her visa expired. In the course of this procedure, the couple decided to move to Poznań. Their reasons were that there were more opportunities to find a job in Poznań, and that it would also be easier for them to take advantage of the MIP's offerings, such as advice and Polish language courses. The greatest difficulty turned out to be proving that the family had a stable source of income: At the time, the family was living on its savings and the husband had not been able to find a job in such a short period of time. Accordingly, they had no stable source of income that could be documented.*

*This is a common problem and one that constitutes a huge obstacle: An existing document legalizing a person's stay expires and, in spite of concerted efforts, the person cannot find a job that would provide sufficient means for the whole family. As a result, people's applications for the legalization of their continued stay are turned down, because one of the basic requirements is not met. In the case in point, the family finally decided on a temporary return to Ukraine. Several factors influenced this decision: uncertainty about whether the woman would receive her temporary residence permit; the need to earn some money; and the sense of isolation (the migrants were far away from their family and, during their stay in Poland, did not manage to make new friends, partly because one of the spouses did not speak Polish).*

**Figure 7b: Meetings at the MIP: example 2**

Another important field of the MIP's activity was a professional advisory service. This involved providing general information about the labor market in Poznań, helping foreign nationals to discover their own potential and giving them useful hints on how to find satisfying jobs. A list of the Internet portals with job offers (including offers in English) was compiled. Additionally, the MIP staff helped migrants to look for job offers or taught migrants to use job search engines. They also helped them to write résumés and cover letters.

A further important aspect of the MIP's activity was **providing migrants with access to the rest of the AMIGA project offerings**. Migrants could, for example, sign up for the MIP's free training courses, advice sessions and seminars:

- **Professional advisory service:** One-hour advice sessions in English or Polish, twice a week. People who were interested in this service were invited to meet with job advisors, who provided professional support on writing résumés in line with Polish standards, instructing people on how to behave during job interviews and coaching them on how to focus on their strengths.
- **Training and advice on starting a business:** People who wanted to set up their own business were invited for the 'Step by step to setting up a business in Poland' training course or were put into direct contact with officials from the Department of Business at City Hall who cooperated with the MIP. The role of advisors was to support migrants in figuring out the best ideas for their future enterprise and asking them questions that would help them prepare a solid business plan.
- **Polish language courses:** Many foreign nationals who came to the MIP for advice did not speak Polish. Those who wanted to learn the language asked to be signed up for a free **Polish course**. Most migrants got their information on the MIP's free courses from our leaflets, the website, or from acquaintances who had previously visited the MIP and therefore knew about these offerings. After signing up for the courses, migrants were informed by the staff or the coordinator about the start date, the venue and the need to take a preliminary test (in the case of advanced language courses). The courses were very popular. For some individuals, participation in these courses was one of the forms of support offered by the MIP that they took advantage of; others came to the MIP only to enroll in the course. Demand was strong, and not everyone who wanted to take part could be admitted. In admitting people to these courses, we gave top priority to migrants who were experiencing job placement difficulties due to their poor command of Polish, who were planning to stay in Poland for a longer period of time and who did not have the financial means to pay for similar but fee-paying courses. Very often, we had to explain why some people qualified to participate in the free courses while others did not. This was the case especially with people who worked for larger corporations and therefore had no problems on the labor market, but who were very eager to learn Polish.

### **Example 3: Looking for a business idea**

*This example documents the case of a middle-aged migrant from an EU country. Though lacking proper financial means, the man had a very ambitious plan to set up his own business in the garden services sector. He also planned to make significant investments. It turned out, however, that the situation on the market was completely different to what he had assumed, with many firms offering the same kind of services. It was therefore crucial to take account of both competitors and the need to come up with a unique selling proposition (USP). The man quickly came up with a solution that would involve addressing customers who have smaller gardens, as the majority of offers target people with very large gardens. There nevertheless seemed to be an element of wishful thinking and a lack of realism in his*

*plans. It is not possible to get a loan to immediately go out and buy tools; and given the man's lack of financial and life stability (problems with accommodation and the legalization of his stay), setting up his own business would have been a big challenge. At the next meeting, while drawing up a business plan, the migrant decided that the more realistic option would be first to find a job and then to set up his own business.*

**Figure 8: Meetings at the MIP: example 3**

Very often, foreign nationals coming to the MIP were struggling to fill out numerous forms and applications that had to be submitted in Polish. While most of these were applications for temporary residence permits, there were also other forms. Examples include forms documenting the foreign national's obligation to prove that they had no outstanding taxes, and the documents needed to start work in Poland based on employers' declaration of their intention to entrust a job to a particular foreign individual. Some foreign nationals also asked for someone to accompany them to one of local government offices, which was one aspect of AMIGA's street work activities (see the description elsewhere in this chapter) and which was closely linked to the MIP's activities.

The MIP staff were called on to resolve or provide support for various tasks, some of which were quite simple while others were more complicated. The tasks involved finding accommodation, finding English-speaking nurseries, convincing an employer that the procedure for employing foreign nationals is not difficult, finding information about internships in Poland after graduation, providing information on public libraries and places with free Internet access, finding a doctor who can give medical advice in English, and obtaining information about getting Polish driver's license, gaining recognition for foreign diplomas, doing voluntary work and so on. Given migrants' different life situations and the often quite complicated issues that they face (such as loneliness, family relationship issues and even homelessness), psychological support often became an important aspect of subsequent meetings. Over time, people who visited the MIP would gradually open up and confide more and more in the staff. Many increasingly needed help in their personal affairs.

The most difficult cases were those of homeless migrants. While the support we were able to offer seemed to be insufficient, providing more tangible assistance would have necessitated a structural change within the social welfare system. Homeless migrants did not have steady jobs and were therefore unable to prove any stable source of income. Moreover, a lack of financial means also prevented them from buying insurance policies or renting a room/flat. This rapidly became a vicious circle for them: In view of all these factors, the migrants were not able to legalize their stay for more than three months (as EU citizens staying in Poland). By consequence, they were also unable to apply for any social welfare assistance. At the same time, these people were often the victims of numerous acts of discrimination. In spite of their eagerness to find jobs, they remained homeless.

■ **The support provided to migrants**

From September 26, 2013, to December 30, 2014, support was provided to a total of 347 migrants at the MIP, including 45 people who were helped over the phone or by e-mail (25 people a month on average). This high number shows that there is a considerable need for this type of advisory service. Moreover, more than half of the people who came to the MIP in person (about 175 people in all) took advantage of the MIP’s support on several occasions. There were many people with whom we remained in contact for several weeks or even months in the form of meetings, the constant exchange of e-mails and messages via Facebook, and phone calls. After visiting the MIP, many people decided to take advantage of other activities and forms of support offered within the AMIGA project (workshops, Polish language courses, advice, picnics).

The migrants who visited the MIP from September 2013 to December 2014 came from 66 different countries. The largest distinct groupings were migrants from the following countries:

<b>Ukraine</b>	93 people, including 52 women
<b>Spain</b>	18 people
<b>Russia</b>	16 people
<b>Egypt</b>	13 people
<b>Italy</b>	12 people
<b>Pakistan</b>	11 people
<b>India</b>	10 people

**Table 6: Largest distinct groupings**

The presence of newly arrived Ukrainian citizens in Poznań and the increasing number of them taking advantage of the MIP’s services is probably related to the political crisis and the war in Ukraine. Despite the fact that Poznań is far removed from Polish-Ukrainian border, a large group of people of different ages came here in 2014. Many were whole families who came looking for a job.

Women constituted 33% of MIP’s beneficiaries, a figure in line with the numerical predominance of men among foreign nationals in Poznań (Bloch, Czerniejewska, Main 2012). Most of these women were young. Many of them were studying or planning to legalize their stay. Others were keen to find a job after arriving in Poland as they had Polish partners. Polish citizens looking for information on behalf of their friends from abroad also visited the MIP. In some cases, especially in the case of people who contacted us by phone or e-mail, the details of their legal, professional or family situations remained unknown to us.

On average, visits to the MIP lasted about 20 minutes. However, depending on the migrant’s requirements and if both the staff and visitors had enough time, some meetings went on for up to an hour. Often there was a line of people

waiting for visits. Though this forced us to bring meetings to an end more quickly, it also had the positive side-effect of getting the people who visited to talk to each other. During visits, the work of the MIP staff involved outlining the possibilities for obtaining support, providing information and suggesting enrollment for other forms of support (advisory services, Polish courses). Where the need arose, the staff would follow up these meetings by booking further appointments and/or passing on information by phone or e-mail. In line with the requirements of the European Social Fund, which financed the project, the staff were also obliged to fill out the Private Encrypted File System (PEFS) form. Meetings were held in English, Russian, Polish and Spanish, depending on the language in which the foreign nationals and MIP staff could best communicate with one another.

**Profile of beneficiaries based on PEFS cards:** Based on the data from 286 PEFS cards filled out between September 2013 and December 2014, here is a summarized profile of the people who applied for support from the MIP:

<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 198 people (69%) University or equivalent</li> <li>● 53 people (18%) Post-secondary</li> <li>● 20 people (7%) Secondary</li> <li>● 10 people (3.5%) Post-elementary</li> <li>● 3 people (1%) Elementary</li> <li>● 1 person no data</li> </ul>
<b>Median age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 30</li> </ul>
<b>Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 178 people (62%) Men</li> <li>● 108 people (38%) Women</li> </ul>
<b>Professional situation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 218 people (76%) Professionally inactive</li> <li>● 59 people (21%) Employed</li> <li>● 8 people (3%) Unemployed (registered)</li> <li>● 83 people (29%) Studying</li> </ul>

**Table 7: Summarized profile of people who applied for support from the MIP**

The above account shows that the majority of migrants who applied for the MIP’s support were young people. Most of them were highly educated but professionally inactive. The most common reasons for their joblessness were: a poor command of Polish, the lack of a recognized education, low demand for their specific professional skills in Poland and various obstacles to the legalization of their stay. At the same time, the age and education of migrants showed that they have great potential that could be put to good use to the benefit of both Poznań and its society.

■ **Characteristics of MIP beneficiaries**

The people visiting the MIP had both different expectations and different attitudes to the MIP staff. Many were surprised to find that the MIP’s advice was free and that it covered such a wide range of topics – from formal and legal matters to daily life issues, including free job advice, Polish language courses and workshops. For some people, the fact that the MIP was only open two days



Workshop “How to open a company”, Poznań

a week was a major source of inconvenience. Many came frustrated about the difficulties they faced in attempting to legalize their stay and find a job. Others were dissatisfied with offers of paid studies. Many visitors needed both practical and psychological support, while others simply wanted to be listened to. A lot of the people who visited the MIP also had specific problems or expectations. Some, for instance, needed help filling out applications for a temporary residence permit. Others wanted to enroll in Polish language courses or find a service point where they could communicate in English.

For some foreign nationals, overwhelmed by their problems and loneliness, the MIP became a regular stop. This sometimes put the MIP staff in a difficult position, as the clearly defined limits to the support they could provide were repeatedly called into question. That in turn forced them to repeatedly specify the rules governing contact with clients (such as not giving them loans). Matters that initially appeared to be of secondary importance, such as taking business calls or answering e-mails, also had to be spelled out at some point. After a meeting at our office, each migrant was given one of the MIP staff’s business cards in case they needed further contact. Although the staff’s working hours were clearly indicated on the cards, and although the point was stressed during each meeting, evening phone calls were not unusual. Obviously, there were some urgent cases that needed immediate intervention. Yet many such calls were trivial matters relating more to the activities of the street workers. That said, since the MIP staff were the same people who did the street work, it was difficult to keep these tasks and roles separate.

Lastly, it should be noted that, despite the various efforts and activities undertaken, there were still cases in which we were unable to give migrants the support that was expected of us.

**Example 4: A case of the inability to provide support**

*One example involved a man in a very difficult situation – no money, no accommodation and no job – who asked the MIP to find work for him. All he wanted was to earn enough money to buy a return ticket to his home country, but all attempts to find him a job proved ineffective. We did manage to*

*find him a bed at one of Poznań's social lodgings, but only for one night as he did not qualify for social welfare. Regrettably, there was nothing more that could be done. We were unable to contact him again, so we do not know whether he did in fact return to his native country. The more important cases were discussed at monthly meetings with the coordinators (Natalia Bloch and Izabella Main), as well as in the course of our regular work.*

**Figure 9: Meetings at the MIP: example 4**

The activities of the MIP were documented regularly and properly on the cards for particular cases, which included the visitors' personal data, a description of the reason for their visit and initial ideas on how to resolve any issues. All of the MIP staff and street workers had access to these cards and stayed up to date with regard to their content. When clients visited while one employee was busy, all employees could quickly and easily access details of the meetings and a history of the support provided to date. However, since the number of migrants coming to the MIP increased every month, it gradually took the staff more and more time and effort to keep up to date with all the cases. There were also situations in which it proved difficult to recall the exact case history of individuals returning to the MIP after a prolonged absence. Cases where a migrant paid a visit when the MIP had just opened and then reappearing a year later, for instance, sometimes put our employees in an awkward position.

As migrants' interest in the MIP's offerings grew, information about activities of relevance to migrants and organized by other non-governmental institutions began to flow into the MIP. The MIP staff frequently engaged in and promoted activities initiated by other associations and informal groups. For example, they were invited to participate in a discussion following the 'Tolerated stay' campaign carried out by two independent theaters from Łódź and Szczecin. The discussion centered around the situation of foreign nationals in guarded centers in Poland. Moreover, by establishing cooperation with organizations from other cities that also provide migrants with support and have been in existence for much longer, it was possible to raise more and more people's awareness of the existence of the MIP.

Analysis of the various experiences collected during a year and a half of MIP activities indicates that its work has yielded several advantages. On the one hand, it provided valuable support in a number of ways to foreign nationals living in Poznań, some of whom were lost without a knowledge of the Polish language and culture, were unfamiliar with the Polish legal system and did not know how local government offices and other institutions function in Poland. On the other hand, the MIP staff had the opportunity to acquire new expertise and improve their intercultural skills. As noted above, the MIP is the only place in Poznań where foreign nationals can find support, so its operation is of great importance to many people and institutions. Accordingly, continuing its activity seems to be even more necessary. One of the difficulties in the way the MIP

worked was that it was impossible to predict how many clients would turn up and what kind of support they would need. During its regular six-hour opening times, the MIP was visited by as many as ten people, most of them needing long meetings to gather the relevant information and identify the next steps. Such situations led to growing lines of people awaiting their turn and created a sense of tension. This reveals a clear need to increase the number of working hours and the number of days when the MIP is open.

## Poznań: Website and Facebook page

*Karolina Sydow*

The primary aim of the migrant.poznan.pl website was **to gather all relevant information about formal and legal matters in one place and to structure and harmonize it**. The website also contained some information on different aspects of migrants' life in Poland in general and Poznań in particular. It was intended to complement the MIP's activities and serve as a source of first-hand, accessible knowledge. At the same time, it was to serve as an information resource for all organizations that provide migrants with support (i.e. not only those involved in the AMIGA project).

Website content relating to formal and legal issues was compiled in consultation with expert from the Province Governor's Office. All information was translated into English and Russian. This choice of languages was based on earlier analysis of the needs expressed by migrants living in Poznań (and subject to provision for budget limitations).

Before AMIGA began, there were already several Polish information websites for migrants. Some of them included obsolete or incomplete information, and none of them directly referred to Poznań or the Wielkopolska region. In the context of our project, it was very important for us to create a website **containing up-to-date information on formal and legal issues, the labor market and daily life** in Poznań and the Wielkopolska region. It was equally important to publish up-to-date contact data.

The process of preparing some of the information material for the website turned out to be a rather significant challenge. It was also more time-consuming than had been initially anticipated. It was hoped that referring to other websites that described existing regulations would save us a lot of work. In fact, however, constant verification was needed to determine whether the information on these sites was (still) valid and accurate. Very often it was not. Another unexpected obstacle to our efforts to present up-to-date information on the website were significant changes to the Polish law on foreign nationals that took effect in the middle of our project, in May 2014.

### ■ E-MIP

Migrants were able to access information on the website, but also to request support from the MIP staff via a portal. E-mails sent by migrants were thus an-

swered by the MIP staff on a regular basis. While some issues could be resolved by e-mail, others required migrants to visit the MIP in person.

The website also gave migrants access to all the other offerings available under the AMIGA project. Foreign nationals could thus enroll in **training courses, request advice and sign up for other seminars via the portal.**

In order to make the website more attractive and to promote it, a “News” section provided regular updates on current events within the project, as well as photos and videos documenting particular activities within AMIGA. Another form of website promotion was the presentation of stories covering migrants living in Poznań under the heading ‘Personal stories’. In this section, migrants themselves told their stories and talked about the reasons that brought them to Poznań, about their interests, work and everyday life in the city.

**The presence of AMIGA and MIP on Facebook** also turned out to be very important. Although there were initially no plans to set up a Facebook page, we soon realized that this would be an extremely useful and valuable tool of communication with migrants. Very quickly, foreign nationals living in Poznań then began to create their own Facebook groups to share information and arrange integration meetings. The MIP on Facebook became another such group. Since it remained in constant contact with the other groups, this group facilitated the flow of information, communication and promotion. We used the MIP’s profile on Facebook to pass on information about activities within the framework of the AMIGA project, as well as other events that might be of interest to foreign nationals living in Poznań. We posted an assortment of information on this page, such as details of events addressed to English-speakers living in Poznań, news about film festivals showing movies with English subtitles, and updates on events relating to the topic of migration – such as the anti-discrimination workshop.

Synchronizing AMIGA’s activities with the MIP portal and the MIP profile on Facebook proved to be a very valuable exercise. The Facebook page became an excellent source of knowledge on current activities as well as a useful tool of promotion. At the same time, we quickly learned that it would take more time than we had initially assumed to gather and structure reliable information on legal matters.

## Poznań: Polish language courses

*Karolina Sydow*

### ■ **Background: The initial situation in Poznań**

Before the project was launched, the need for free training and Polish language courses for migrants had already been clearly identified. **Poznań, however, had no free and readily available Polish language courses addressed to migrants.**

Such courses were available only to certain groups of migrants, such as people



Polish language course, Poznań

who were registered as unemployed (and even then not in all cases) or those who were entitled to special care from the social welfare services. A large majority of migrants had access only to courses for which they would have had to pay the full cost. Only one school in the city offered a wide range of regular, commercial group courses for different levels of proficiency. The other private language schools also offered Polish language lessons, but tailored their services mainly to individual students.

Since our aim was to provide migrants with relevant support (with a special emphasis on the labor market), we thus recognized that Polish language courses for migrants were an indispensable part of the AMIGA project in Poznań. Not only in this country, **a knowledge of the local language is a necessary condition of successful integration and plays an important role in the context of labor market.** Even if a job requires and/or allows people to communicate in another language, knowing the language of the host country is still a useful asset at work, facilitating communication with co-workers and contributing to better job performance. The migrants we interviewed understood that they needed to put more effort into learning Polish. This would help them not only at work and in daily life, but could also earn them greater respect and understanding on the part of the Polish population.

Polish language courses within the framework of AMIGA:

■ **Interest in courses**

Interest in courses offered under the aegis of AMIGA was huge. Their popularity not only underlined the fact that they were in demand, but also exhibited the existing lack of such courses in Poznań. Doubling the number of teaching hours would definitely bring supply more closely into line with actual demand. One new course was started every month, yet not even that was sufficient to meet migrants' needs. Some people were able to start attending classes immediately after they had enrolled, while others were forced to wait – for several months in some cases. The order in which individuals submitted their applications and fulfilled all the requirements were the decisive factor. However, we were unable to offer classes to everyone who expressed an interest. At times, it was also difficult to form a coherent group, as there was not enough participants with a comparable level of proficiency.

Faced with such huge demand, we therefore applied to the project sponsor to increase the number of teaching hours and were given consent to reallocate some funds from the budget.

■ **Enrollment**

Enrollment in the courses took place at the Migrant Info Point. Information on the courses was posted on the MIP website and printed on the leaflets distributed by the MIP. Some migrants visited the MIP for the sole purpose of enrolling in a course. For others, this was just one form of the support they used within the AMIGA project. Some migrants did not know about the courses until they visited the MIP. Given such huge interest in the courses, we took account of people's level of Polish language skills and their knowledge of other languages when putting people on the waiting lists. The order in which individuals submitted their applications and fulfilled all the requirements for participation were the decisive factor. Priority was given to people with job placement challenges, people who could not afford commercial courses and people who were planning to stay in Poland for a longer period of time.

■ **Course organization**

The AMIGA project planning envisaged 480 hours of language tuition. Rather than the six-month cycles originally planned, we decided to divide courses into three-month cycles to make it easier to ensure the attendance of participants. We then left open the option of extending the course for another three months if a given group attended classes regularly. This proved to be better than blocking six-month periods for irregular attendants.

The majority of courses was organized into blocks of 36 hours of practical learning of Polish. Lessons were taught twice a week and lasted 1.5 hours. Intensive courses were also organized, with lessons held every day for two or three weeks at a time. In addition, we organized one 'survival course in Polish' (two meetings on two weekends).

While we offered courses for different levels of proficiency, most were for beginners. We also tried to create separate classes for native speakers of Slavic languages (Russian, Ukrainian), as they were generally able to learn Polish faster.

The courses were conducted in small groups (of no more than 12 people) to help people feel comfortable. The lessons were delivered by one or two tutors (language school employees) at a language school in the center of Poznań. The project coordinator was responsible for organizing and coordinating the courses.

■ **Attendance**

Attendance of some courses was very high and very regular. For some of the groups with high attendance, we were indeed able to extend the course for another three months. Some of the groups – mostly groups of migrants from Ukraine, Russia or Belarus – experienced low attendance.

There may be several reasons for this. One is that, as we noted above, people who already speak a Slavic languages can often learn Polish better and assimilate it faster in their daily life. In addition, it is easier for them to practice the language during regular conversations outside the classroom environment, and they have far fewer difficulties understanding Polish. By consequence, they may not have been as highly motivated to take part in the course as other participants.

At the same time, one clear correlation was observable: Migrants who took advantage of different forms of support and those who remained in regular contact with the MIP staff were more interested in continuing to learn the language.

Giving the migrants (many of them new arrivals) an opportunity to meet other people in similar life situations was an additional benefit of organizing Polish language courses within the AMIGA project. The courses helped participants to make new acquaintances which turned into lasting and less formal social contacts. For instance, the participants of one of the courses went out together and spent the evening at a restaurant after each of their classes.

Taking part in courses for three or six months also ensured that participants stayed in regular contact with people involved in the AMIGA project, which made it easier for us to pass on information about activities undertaken within the framework of AMIGA.

■ **Strengths and weaknesses of the courses:**

- The huge popularity of the language courses proved that they were needed, but they were still insufficient to meet actual demand.
- It was difficult to assess who the beneficiaries of free courses were.
- Organizing the courses was a major challenge. In the future, courses should be organized or coordinated as additional activities by other players that cooperate with the MIP and the AMIGA project.

## Poznań: Individual advice for job seekers

*Katarzyna Banaszak*

The growing number of migrants who want to enter the Polish labor market has brought about new challenges to job advisory services. While the number of migrants who opt for only a short-term stay in Poland is decreasing, the number of foreign nationals who plan to stay for longer periods is increasing (Paszowska-Rogacz, Olczak, Kownacka, Cieślukowska: 2006). This being the case, there is a current need to provide foreign nationals with support on the labor market. To meet this need, the AMIGA project launched various activities aimed at supporting the professional integration and adaptation of migrants living in Poland.

**Individual job advice** was a service provided to complement activities offered within the framework of the Polish-German project AMIGA on behalf of foreign nationals

who were planning to settle in Poland and search for a stable job. No similar service has ever been provided in Poznań up to now.

Individual job advice was offered at the Migrant Info Point from November 2013 to May 2015. During this period, job advisory consultants were available to migrants for two hours a week. Over 100 individuals took advantage of this service, most of them men, students and/or individuals with academic qualifications. The largest single group of job seekers came from Ukraine, followed by Russia and Spain. There were also people from Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cameroon, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Germany, India, Iraq, Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and the USA.

Foreign nationals had the opportunity to take advantage of free meetings with one of three job advisors. These advisors attended two evaluation training courses on multicultural consultancy organized as part of the AMIGA project in cooperation with the Migration Forum in Warsaw. The first course was held before they joined the AMIGA project, the second during the project. In the course of the project, the three advisors also met regularly to share their experiences and discuss methods that were proving useful in work with foreign nationals. At these meetings, difficult situations were discussed and problematic issues were clarified. These sessions were an important element of mutual support to the group of job advisors and were mostly initiated by the coordinator of the AMIGA project.

Specifically, the services provided in the context of individual job advice for migrants included such items as: defining the professional situation of the individual seeking advice; providing support with the management of personal and professional development; advice on courses and training programs to improve foreign nationals' professional qualifications and align them with Polish standards; sharing information about different institutions and organizations that can provide further support to migrants; giving advice on how to write letters of application; and supplying information about potential jobs in and around Poznań. In the course of job advisory sessions, foreign nationals were encouraged to contact firms directly. This was done as part of the 'Employers open to foreign nationals' campaign initiated by AMIGA. A list of the firms that, in the course of the project, declared their openness to hiring migrants was posted on the MIP website ([www.migrant.poznan.pl](http://www.migrant.poznan.pl)).

#### ■ Job advisory process

At the beginning of each advisory session, the rules governing the provision of this service within the AMIGA project were explained to the migrants in attendance. First, the differences between this form of support and that offered by an employment agency were spelled out. Many migrants coming for meetings expected simply to be given a list of current job offers, and for the job advisor to help them look for offers of employment that matched their qualifications and experience. This expectation may have been due to the lack of comparable forms of job advisory support in their countries of origin. It seems that many

people still perceive job advisors first and foremost as individuals who provide information and advice (Kargulowa: 1986).

It should be noted that, while this perception of advisors can lead to resistance or even a lack of personal commitment in case of Polish job seekers, it actually improves effectiveness in the case of migrants, particularly in situations where foreign nationals have only recently arrived in Poland and still feel rather lost. In some cases, however, the job advisors consciously tried not to give ready-made solutions to avoid assuming responsibility for the person who came looking for advice.

An important stage of the job advisory process was to define the specific needs of the foreign national. Next, the job advisor made sure that he or she had fully understood these needs, verifying them where necessary. Information on the situation of migrants was collected and an attempt was made to define the main challenges. To understand these challenges, further questions were asked and additional documents (such as résumés and cover letters) were analyzed. One important issue was trying to strike the right balance between the values and expectations born of migrants' original cultural context and the values and expectations that characterize the Polish labor market, as well as the individual needs of the people who came for advice.

Another step was to learn the history of migrants' previous attempts and activities to get a job, and to define the main common goal to be achieved by the migrant and advisor in order to change the situation. When foreign nationals are looking for a job, many different problems can arise. Some migrants had unrealistic expectations, while others lacked the knowledge and skills needed to solve these issues. The next step was to outline a rational plan of action. In some cases, foreign nationals were passed on to other experts and institutions that could offer more effective support to help them enter the Polish labor market.

#### ■ Preferences of foreign nationals

About 80% of the more than 100 migrants who took advantage of AMIGA's job advisory service were looking for their first job in Poland. The remaining 20% stated that they would like to swap their present job for another one.

Most foreign nationals came expecting to get advice on effective methods and techniques for looking and applying for jobs in Poland, help in preparing application documents (résumés and cover letters) and support in preparing for job interviews. Foreign nationals also expected to find information about the Polish labor market, the conditions of hiring foreign nationals, unemployment registration procedures and opportunities to acquire new skills or engage in retraining. Migrants were interested in attending AMIGA's Polish language courses and its training courses to help them start a business.

Few foreign nationals expected help in choosing the right professional path or assessing their strengths, weaknesses, interests and professional skills.

■ **Approach adopted by the job advisors**

Aware that migrants might feel uncertain and uncomfortable, the job advisors first tried to build a relationship based on mutual trust in their meetings with foreign nationals. Most meetings took place in friendly and, wherever possible, informal atmosphere. Although this often required us to devote more time to meetings or to extend them, this proved worthwhile as it helped to establish a solid foundation for ongoing cooperation. One significant factor that influenced foreign nationals' positive attitude was their previous contact with the Migrant Info Point staff and street workers, who had shown themselves to be very dedicated to their job. Thanks to this experience, migrants knew that the MIP would be a "safe place" where they could get professional help.

Job advisors working on the AMIGA project already had intercultural experience. Wherever possible, they also sought to refer to information on the country of origin of each individual foreign national. Many migrants reported numerous difficulties relating to their job search, including discriminatory behavior on the part of employers. In many cases, this undermined the migrants' self-esteem.

In such situations, our priority was to try to be understanding and help migrants to regain confidence and focus on their potential, especially in light of their migration experience. Job advisors tried to show foreign nationals that they had brought their own cultural capital with them to Poznań, and that this could be of value to local employers. During meetings with job advisors, migrants were also encouraged to take part in activities that involved cooperating with Poles and seeking closer contact with the local population. It was hoped that this, too, would help migrants gain useful information that could in turn help them to enter the Polish labor market.

■ **Job advisory process and obstacles**

It is important to note several issues that made it difficult to build a good working relationship between job seekers and job advisors.

**The first barrier was related to the language of communication.** Not all migrants spoke fluent English, and only a few (mostly Ukrainians) could speak Polish.

Cultural differences were another potential source of difficulties. These were visible primarily at the level of non-verbal communication and in patterns of behavior: not turning up for fixed appointments with no prior warning, for example, or being 30 minutes late for advisory sessions.

Another barrier concerns the **inappropriate expectations of foreign nationals about AMIGA's job advisory services** compared to what they could legitimately expect of an employment agency, where many simply expect to find perfectly matched job offers. In some cases, people were escorted (usually by their spouse) to the advisory sessions. This was generally no problem, as long as the people accompanying the migrants did not try to help them by answering questions for them.

#### ■ **Future recommendations**

A job advisory service is not a one-time act of giving support. It is a long-term process, especially at a time of personal transition such as when individuals change their place of work or residence. More time should therefore be devoted to job advisory services. It would also make sense to add other forms of support on legal questions relating to the Polish labor market or employment agencies. In some cases, the support of a psychologist with intercultural expertise would be needed. In addition, series of workshops focusing on acculturation and job seeking seem to be a good idea.

Issues such as how to write letters of application and prepare for interviews could be discussed either during training sessions or in group advisory sessions. This would give individual advisory sessions more time to devote to other issues. After the Migrant Info Point changed its location and moved into separate premises, it became easier to meet foreign nationals' expectations and organize advisory sessions at times that were more convenient to them.

The job advisors who worked for the AMIGA project are willing to take part in further new training courses on multicultural advisory services, and also to meet more often with other advisors to share their knowledge and experience and help improve on the methods, techniques and tools that have been used in the advisory process so far. It would also be worthwhile to run promotional campaigns stressing the positive aspects of hiring foreign nationals in Poland.

#### ■ **Conclusions**

There is no doubt that the individual job advisory services offered within the AMIGA project were a popular and necessary form of support for the increasing number of migrants who had decided to live in Poznań and look for a job here.

The Migrant Info Point, which all migrants had visited before they took advantage of the advisory service, turned out to be a place where migrants felt safe. This alone made it easier to them to trust the job advisors. In the perception of foreign nationals, the MIP has become a place they can come back to at any time, not only to receive professional help and support, but also to be listened to and understood.

For the advisors who took part in the project, the experience of working with migrants was an extremely valuable one. They benefited from their involvement in fascinating workshops and evaluation meetings. In addition, their interaction and the relationships they built with foreign nationals gave them a deeper insight into other people's needs.

Based on our experience within the framework of the AMIGA project, we have arrived at the following conclusions:

- Job advisory services should be improved by extending the time set aside for individual meetings.

- People who are looking for advice should have the opportunity to meet their advisor more often.
- Workshops focusing on issues relating to the search for a job should be organized.
- There is a need to integrate legal and psychological advice in this service.

## Poznań: Step by step to starting a business in Poland

*Robert Rydzewski*

It is much more difficult for migrants than for Polish citizens to set up their own business in Poland. Not only do migrants have to overcome the obstacles which all entrepreneurs encounter when launching a business, they also have to familiarize themselves with the formal aspects of the business environment works in Poland. At the same time, they often have to overcome barriers related to language. Very often, formal and legal issues relating to the possibility of legalizing both their stay and their company only add to the many difficulties they must face, depending on a migrant's country of origin.

In the AMIGA project, migrants intending to start their own business were able to take advantage of free training and receive individual advice on starting a business in Poland. These services were provided in cooperation with staff from the Training Advisory Center of the Business and Agriculture Department at Poznań City Hall.

**In the course of the AMIGA project, the training course "Step by step to starting a business" in Poland was conducted twelve times, with 10 to 20 people taking part in every workshop. These cyclical training courses, held once every two months on average, were delivered in three languages: English, Spanish and Russian. These languages were chosen in line with the specific needs of the potential participants who applied to the MIP for this kind of support, ensuring that the services on offer genuinely reflected the actual needs of migrants. Each workshop lasted three to four hours, during which the procedures for registering a business in Poland were discussed. Participants also had the opportunity to learn about specific aspects of running a business in Poland. The scope of training included information on applicable laws, organizational and legal forms of self-employment in Poland, procedures for registering and running a business depending on the kind of firm, the cost of running a business and acquiring a business license, the basic rights and obligations of entrepreneurs, what institutions are available to support them, and what sources of financial support can be drawn on. During the training courses, particular emphasis was placed on the formal requirements related to setting up a business depending on the future entrepreneur's country of origin. All participants were given a set of training materials prepared in the language in which the course was held. These materials were also posted on the MIP website.**

After each course, enough time was left for individual conversations with the advisors and other participants. This indeed turned out to be a crucial aspect of the

training sessions. Both during the break and in the subsequent gathering, migrants were able to clarify any issues they had not fully understood. Perhaps even more importantly, they had the opportunity to get to know each other and establish contact with other future entrepreneurs.

**Individual advice on starting a business in Poland** was available to migrants and Polish citizens alike, five days a week (during office hours) at the Training Advisory Center of the Business and Agriculture Department at Poznań City Hall. Foreign nationals who came to the MIP and were interested in this kind of support were given a specific appointment. This was made possible thanks to close cooperation between the people involved in the AMIGA project and the employees of the Training Advisory Center. It is interesting to note that, although the Center had been in operation for many years, it was rarely visited by foreigners until it began cooperating with AMIGA. However, as a result of promotional activities initiated by AMIGA, which reached out to migrant communities and spread the word about advisory and training services, the number of migrants taking advantage of the advisory services offered by the Center increased by a factor of twelve.

The fact that the **advisors accommodated the language needs of migrants meant that advisory sessions were not restricted to Polish**, even though it was standard practice on the AMIGA project to use Polish at work. The advisors drew on their own language skills to give their clients advice in Polish, English or German. For appointments booked in advance, it was also possible to provide information in Russian, Spanish or French.

**Advisory sessions with migrants usually lasted an hour, which was longer than in the case of the average Polish visitor.** There were two reasons for this. First, in the case of migrants, it was also necessary to explain relevant Polish laws and the context of running a business in Poland. Second, the migrants who attended were often better prepared for the advisory sessions than their Polish counterparts. Many already had clear ideas about their future business and asked a lot of questions that they had prepared in advance.

One predominant concept among the foreign nationals who took part in the AMIGA project was the idea of setting up a one-man business relating directly to the migrant's country of origin. Examples included a French citizen who wanted to import wines from France and a Peruvian with plans to organize tourist trips to Peru. Yet there were also some ideas that were not connected to the migrant's country of origin, such as the provision of IT services and Internet shops.

The barriers which the foreigners indicated were as follows:

- The inability to start a business due to the migrant's legal status in Poland;
- A poor (or non-existent) knowledge of Polish and problems communicating with Polish local government offices and institutions in English;
- The intricacies of Polish law and procedures that were too complicated and time-consuming;
- A lack of options to apply for EU subsidies.

Analysis of the experience we gathered in the course of the AMIGA project allows several conclusions to be drawn with regard to the training courses that sought to help foreign nationals start a business:

- a) Given the increased interest in training and the active involvement of participants, it is reasonable to conclude that such training plays an important role in enhancing migrants' entrepreneurship.
- b) According to the employees from the Training Advisory Center, the cyclical training courses applied very good practices, allowing the trainers to present and explain the basic forms of setting up a business and outline the practicalities of running a business in Poland. After receiving this training, foreign nationals who came for individual advice arrived with very specific questions and ideas, which made these appointments more effective.
- c) According to the advisors who conducted the training courses, the optimal size of a group is 15 people at most.
- d) Although many foreign nationals can communicate in Polish, training should be delivered in the migrants' mother tongue of migrants, because even people with a very good command of Polish language may have difficulties understanding certain complex legal issues.

AMIGA project activities that related to support in starting a business showed that it does not normally take huge financial means to initiate entrepreneurship among migrants. Very often it is a question of adapting an existing offer from state institutions to the migrants' needs and promoting information on it among interested groups. Nevertheless, much remains to be done. In many local government offices, Polish is still the only language of communication. This obstacle could be overcome if these offices were to hire at least one English-speaking person, or if obligatory English lessons were decreed from the top down for current employees.

## Poznań: Positive image

*Karolina Sydow*

In Poznań, we recognized that it would make sense to develop activities that would help build a positive atmosphere surrounding the topic of migrants and migration. We sought to achieve this by improving local awareness of foreign nationals' presence in the city and highlighting the positive role they play in the cultural, economic and intellectual life of the city. Our aim was to draw attention to the contribution they make to their new social environment. We also wanted to show that supporting foreign nationals does not mean supporting competitors, but actually yields benefits to the whole community. To meet this goal, we launched several activities.

**One of them involved media campaigns in the local press and on local radio.** In the first phase of the project, three articles were published and three radio broadcasts were aired, all of them devoted to foreign nationals and providing information on the activities of the MIP. From January to March 2015, one campaign included ten published articles (one article a week) and five radio reports, as well as regular ad-

vertisements for these texts and broadcasts. The campaign was run in cooperation with Gazeta Wyborcza (one of Poland's most influential daily newspapers, which also issues a local supplement focusing on Poznań) and Radio Merkury (the best-known local radio station).

The aim of the campaign was to present stories about foreign nationals living in Poznań. Cooperation with journalists mainly involved giving them a clear understanding of the desired message and putting them in touch with specific foreign nationals. In some cases, we also took part in preparing the material (for radio reports). The protagonists featured in the reports were chosen from among migrants who took part in the AMIGA project or from among other foreign nationals we contacted in different ways. We attached special importance to running a diverse array of stories that were both interesting and representative.

**The campaign in the press and on the radio was combined with promotion of the competition for the best entrepreneur** (Poznań Leader of Entrepreneurship/ Poznański Lider Przedsiębiorczości). The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of this competition will take place in 2015. It is open to all entrepreneurs who run a business in Poznań. Although foreign nationals were always allowed to take part in the contest, they had never done so in practice – which is precisely why we decided to promote this competition among migrants so intensively. Inspired by a similar competition in Munich, we cooperated with Poznań City Hall in 2015 to ensure that four special distinctions would be set aside for migrant entrepreneurs. The campaign in the press and on the radio was launched to coincide with the date when the two-month application period for the competition began. During these two months, we focused on presenting migrants who are entrepreneurs. At the same time, we used articles in the press and radio reports to encourage migrants to participate in the competition. The results of the competition had not yet been announced when this report was being prepared.

Our next activity was a **poster campaign**. Initially, this idea too was inspired by discussions about plans for a similar campaign in Munich. The final shape of the campaign grew out of cooperation with Lublin City Hall and the Lublin-based organization Homo Faber (with which cooperation was established in the course of the AMIGA project). We relied on a form of low-key messages employed in Lublin itself, providing basic information whose aim was simply to draw local residents' attention to the fact that Poznań is diversified. For instance, we published information about how many different languages are spoken in Poznań and how many different countries are represented by people living in Poznań. The posters were displayed in public transportation vehicles and at bus and tram stops.

As a part of the process of nurturing a positive attitude toward migrants living in Poznań, we also conducted three two-day **training sessions for local government officials who either have either direct or indirect dealings with migrants at different institutions** (Poznań City Hall, the District Employment Office, the Department of Civil Affairs and Foreign Nationals at the Wielkopolska Voivodship Office, the

Regional Social Security Center and the National Health Fund). This training aimed to sensitize these officials to cultural differences and draw their attention to the unique aspects involved in working with migrants. The training supplied information on the following subjects:

- a) Factors that influence the behavior of foreign nationals in government offices: legal, social and psychological aspects and the circumstances of living in a new country;
- b) The role government officials play in contact with foreign nationals: the perspective of the government office, the personal perspective of individual officials and the perspective of the foreign nationals;
- c) Work standards that should be maintained when dealing with foreign nationals;
- d) How foreign nationals perceive Polish officials and institutions.

Our offerings generated considerable interest, and we received a positive response from all the local government offices concerned. To meet demand, we increased the number of training courses from two to three. Each course was attended by 15 to 20 people. It turned out that, for the majority of officials, including those who worked at the Department of Civil Affairs and Foreign Nationals at the Wielkopolska Voivodship Office (who had regular contact with the foreign nationals), this was the first training they had ever received on the subject. The participants stressed that they were positively surprised with the workshop approach and enjoyed the fact that this was not just another training course where they were given dry facts and information.

Initially, we planned to conduct the training course on formal requirements regarding the hiring of foreign nationals for employers, too. In the course of the project, however, we changed the way we approached this task. Instead of organizing training for groups of employers, we got in touch with individual employers and discussed the problems they have with hiring foreign nationals. This was done in face-to-face meetings and over the phone, partly within the framework of the MIP's activities, and partly when employers approached us on their own initiative. Some of them heard about us through the campaign 'Employers open to foreign nationals' (an add-on AMIGA activity that had not been planned initially). In addition, we prepared information material on the hiring of foreign nationals for employers. This material was disseminated to employers via employers' associations, chambers of commerce and academic careers offices.

## Poznań: Social events

*Agata Kochaniewicz*

Some activities that were not originally planned were undertaken in the course of the AMIGA project. One of these involved arranging informal social gatherings with foreign nationals, mostly in the form of picnics. These events were organized regularly (on a monthly basis) starting in April 2014. Migrants visiting the MIP often stressed their feeling of loneliness and difficulties making new friends. We therefore decided to respond to their needs and suggestions in this area. The AMIGA



Informal social gatherings with foreign nationals, organized by AMIGA team Poznań

team invited both new arrivals and long-standing migrants in Poznań to come to bring their friends, families and children along to the picnics. In the spring and summer, we organized picnics at different parks in Poznań. Usually, people brought food and shared it with others; some also brought board games and sports equipment. Thanks to these informal social events, the foreign nationals, many of whom were newcomers to Poznań, had an opportunity to meet people who had been here longer. They were thus able to share their experience, gather pieces of advice or simply to chat with someone from a different country. The positive echo encouraged us to continue these “international picnics” even in the colder season. In the fall and winter, we therefore organized meetings at the MIP office. In November, for instance, the MIP office hosted ‘Andrzejki’ (Saint Andrew’s Eve), a traditional feast celebrated in Poland on the night of November 30. During the Andrzejki party, the guests tried to read their future from molten wax poured into water, in accordance with a Polish folk tradition. A woman from Indonesia also introduced the participants to Indonesian shadow theater.

Within the framework of the AMIGA project, we also organized several “theme picnics” for Poznań-based foreign nationals. In May, we joined with urban activist Borys Kolego and got involved in the international “Restaurant Day” campaign, setting up the Jeżyce international bistro in one of Poznań’s districts. The foreign nationals prepared a multicultural mix of tastes, colors and aromas, giving local residents an opportunity to taste different styles of cuisine, listen to Asian music and spend a day in international company. Despite the unfavorable weather conditions, so many people came that all the food was gone within three hours. People have since inquired when the next such event will be held.

The monthly social event in October 2014 was organized as a “Migration Day” in cooperation with the cultural center Centrum Kultury Zamek. The idea was to present the challenges of migration, in relation to both Poznań and the Polish social context, to a wider audience. Several events were arranged to bring the subject closer to people, the first being an open debate on the situation of refugees in Poland. People who had themselves lived in closed refugee centers shared their experience in this debate. Next there were multicultural workshops for children, a movie show and a theater performance. The latter was rather unusual in that it was the result of a workshop carried out by Fundacja Strefa WolnoSłowa (FreeWord

Zone Foundation), whose participants were people of both Polish and foreign origin. The starting point for the multicultural workshops was a text by Karen Blixen entitled "Babette's Feast", which was followed by the participants' stories and migration biographies.

During Migration Day, we organized another international picnic at which one dish from Mexico, Taiwan, India, Ukraine, Morocco and many other countries was served. Everything was prepared by foreign nationals who were in close contact with the MIP. A concert by Senegalese band Mamadou & Sama Yoon provided the musical background to the picnic.

These events proved very popular not only among the foreign nationals themselves, but also among locals who often know little about migrants' history, their current situation and the problems they struggle with. The events also introduced locals to a concept of multiculturalism that often goes unnoticed in everyday life, seeking to open them up to cultural differences and otherness. Foreign nationals themselves often engaged in promoting the picnics in social groups on Facebook, while some also proposed themes for different events.

## Munich: Participants of AMIGA project

*Ulrike Schulz*

In the period from September 2013 to the end of February 2015, more than 1,000 people in total took advantage of AMIGA's service offerings. Depending on the scope of activities, the project documentation distinguished between registered participants and participants who fall below a certain minimum threshold. The former signed up to participate in the AMIGA project and filled out a project data sheet. It is therefore possible to make accurate statements about the age, origin and qualifications of these individuals. The latter merely signed a list of participants but did not fill out the data sheet. It is therefore only possible to distinguish between the genders of these people. Table 8 summarizes the sociodemographic attributes of the participants.

The registered participants in the AMIGA project came from 36 different countries. The most frequent countries of origin were China (16%), Spain (9.5%), Greece and Italy (7.5% each) and Romania (6.8%). The other countries (in descending order of frequency) included Brazil, Poland, Russia, France, India, Colombia, Kosovo, the USA, Lebanon, Mexico, Peru, Portugal, Slovakia, Turkey, Hungary, Ukraine, the UK, Bangladesh, Egypt, Argentina, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Georgia, Iran, Croatia, Morocco, Macedonia, Serbia, Togo and the Czech Republic.

Job seekers who were not registered with the Employment Agency Munich or the JobCenter accounted for the largest single group of registered participants (38%), followed by migrants who were employed but not in keeping with their qualifications (30%). International students at Munich universities accounted for 18%, 11% were graduates and 3% claimed to be self-employed.

Registered participants	Participants under the minimum threshold	Inquiries by e-mail/phone	Total
147	728	More than 200	At least 1,075

Details of registered participants		
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 %</li> <li>• 17.7 %</li> <li>• 25 %</li> <li>• 29.2 %</li> <li>• 10.9 %</li> <li>• 2 %</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 41+ years</li> <li>• 36-40 years</li> <li>• 31-35 years</li> <li>• 26-30 years</li> <li>• 18-25 years</li> <li>• Not specified</li> </ul>
<b>Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 67 % women</li> <li>• 33 % men</li> </ul>	
<b>Country of origin: EU/non-EU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 % non-EU</li> <li>• 48 % EU</li> <li>• 2 % not specified</li> </ul>	
<b>Participation in AMIGA offerings (multiple answers possible):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44 % (71)</li> <li>• 39 % (63)</li> <li>• 17 % (27)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentees</li> <li>• Participants in AMIGA seminar(s)</li> <li>• Interview partners in AMIGA study</li> </ul>
<b>Target group 1: Qualified migrants with job placement challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 78 %</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 53 % EU</li> <li>• 44 % non-EU</li> <li>• 3 % not specified</li> </ul>
<b>Target group 2: International graduates and students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 %</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 85 % non-EU</li> <li>• 15 % EU</li> </ul>
<b>Target group 3: Migrant entrepreneurs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 %</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 53 % EU</li> <li>• 47 % non-EU</li> </ul>

Table 8: Overview of participants in the AMIGA project, produced by project staff

■ **Assessment of the AMIGA project by the participants**

The scouts’ close contact and regular dialogue with the target groups made it possible to elicit feedback from participants and find out how participants perceived the project offerings.

Cultural differences (such as information-gathering habits and a lack of systemic knowledge) play a conspicuous role in the communication of information about the labor market. The participants thus found it helpful that the AMIGA project not only supplied them with information and details of specific offerings, but also gave them a chance to get to know Germany’s consulting culture and learn the importance of showing initiative. In the future, this experience will help them find information for themselves about important topics.

AMIGA seminars and information events gave the target groups practical hints on how to successfully position themselves on the labor market. The MigMENT mentoring program was seen to provide powerful assistance in the application process, as participants received support from experienced mentors. The AMIGA service offerings were very well received by participants, although some expressed the desire for the project to be (even) closer to the local labor market.

Specifically, the scouts and project managers were repeatedly asked about personal contact with firms and job placement opportunities. In this context, the job fair showed itself to be a suitable platform to establish direct links with companies.

The monthly social event also met with positive acceptance. The participants appreciated the opportunity to share information and experience with other migrants who were in a similar situation to themselves. AMIGA participants themselves expressed that they did not feel like an isolated community. On the contrary, they took support offerings such as the AMIGA project as an indication that the City of Munich is genuinely interested in migrants.

### Munich: MigMENT

*Dastin Schulz/Ulrike Schulz*

The aim of the MigMENT mentoring program was to improve the career prospects of the project target groups. The MigMENT mentoring program targeted international students at Munich universities and migrants with academic or comparable vocational qualifications who were faced with the challenge of launching or relaunching their career. One member of the project management team was primarily responsible for designing and implementing the MigMENT program, devoting 15 hours a week to this task. The same person also oversaw the recruiting of mentors and mentees. The recruiting of mentees involved substantial support from the scouts.

Goals	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To have gainfully employed individuals (volunteer mentors) support mentees</li> <li>● To develop a strategy to launch/relaunch the mentee's career</li> <li>● To analyze strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>● To overcome language barriers in the context of administrative affairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mentees' (un)reliability: punctuality, keeping appointments</li> <li>● Reliable monitoring: feedback to the project management on development of the partnership</li> <li>● Mentees' reluctance to ask questions</li> <li>● Mentees' fear of appearing too demanding</li> <li>● Exaggerated expectations placed on MigMENT (e.g. direct job placement)</li> </ul>
Mentees' expectations	Mentors' motives and benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To work together on application documents</li> <li>● To practice job interview situations</li> <li>● To receive feedback on their personality</li> <li>● To gain the opportunity to build networks</li> <li>● To receive support when visiting authorities, preparing official documents, getting their certificates recognized etc.</li> <li>● To improve their German skills</li> <li>● To be placed in a job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interest in voluntary work/corporate social responsibility</li> <li>● Knowledge of possible difficulties due to their own experience abroad</li> <li>● Opportunity to make contact with potential future employees</li> <li>● Extension of their own networks</li> <li>● Chance to improve their social and intercultural skills</li> <li>● Chance to improve their consulting and leadership skills</li> </ul>

Table 9: Goals, expectations and challenges in the MigMENT program

The requirements for participation were minimal. Mentees were required to sign a declaration of consent for their participation and fill out a profile sheet. This sheet served as the basis for assigning each individual to a suitable mentor. There were no conditions in terms of minimum language skills, contributions to costs or fixed time commitments.

Work to recruit participants began at the end of October 2013 and ended in December 2014. On December 31, 2014, 71 mentees were registered. All mentees were supplied with information material about the AMIGA project, the European Social Fund and the designated feedback channel, which was the Munich Employment and Qualification Program (MBQ). Each mentee signed to confirm that they had received these materials. 73% of all mentees are women, 27% are men. A total of 26 different nationalities were represented among the AMIGA mentees, including people from EU and non-EU countries (see figure 10).

Spain, Greece, Romania, Brazil and China accounted for the largest percentages of mentees. It is also interesting to note that a large proportion of mentees (33.8%) came from Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries. One possible explanation could be the AMIGA brand (“amiga” is Spanish for [female] friend). Another could be the poor economic situation in Spain.

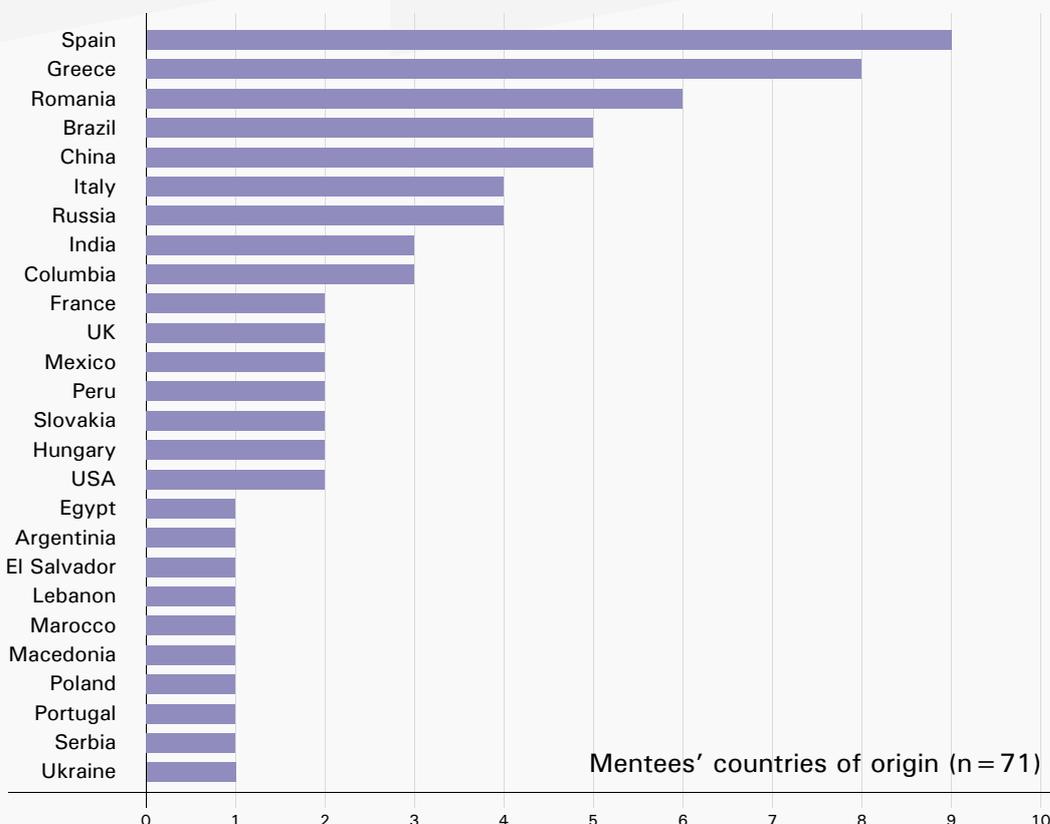


Figure 10: Mentees’ countries of origin

The age structure of mentees was as follows: The majority (39.4%) were aged 36 or over; 32.4% were aged 26-30 years; 19.7% were aged 31-35 years; and 8.5% were aged 18-25 years.

The mentees work in a wide range of disciplines. The biggest single group (14%) work in economic science, followed by 5.6% each in intercultural communication and biology. The list of participants also included a number of individuals who work in the humanities, linguistics/languages and scientific disciplines. Engineers working in a variety of disciplines together made a group of 12 people (17%).

Asked about their expectations of the MigMENT program when signing up, 68% of mentees cited "networking". 37% wanted feedback on their personality and information about certain occupations and industries. 34% expected to be able to review their application documents together with the mentor. 18% said they hoped to get support in starting their own business.

Experienced practitioners with an interest in intercultural issues were recruited as **mentors**. These people were willing to pass on their career experience and extensive knowledge to others. A total of 43 voluntary mentors took part in the MigMENT program. The main channels via which mentors were recruited were networks, cooperation with two voluntary foundations, "Gute Tat" ("Good Deed") and "Tatendrang" ("Enthusiasm"), recommendations by representatives of the institutions in the expert groups, cold and warm calling via Xing, recommendations from past mentors and focused telephone acquisition.

81% of the mentors were German nationals. Seven other nationalities were also represented, namely Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Morocco, Turkey, Russia and Spain. Like the mentees, the mentors too work in many different lines, including social occupations, the sciences and engineering. Business management (16%) and human resources management (16%) accounted for two large blocks.

**Matching** was based on the profile sheets filled out in advance by the participants. Initial allocation was followed by a talk with the mentor and a talk with the mentee to clarify expectations and propose potential tandem partners. If both sides were happy with the matching proposal, a first meeting was arranged in the presence of the project management and on the AMIGA premises to allow mentor and mentee to get to know each other. After that, the tandem (the mentee and mentor pairing) began their activities independently.

To support these partnerships, the AMIGA project management designed a set of mentoring guidelines. Covering topics such as communication, feedback, target agreements, application documents and processes and other matters relating to leadership/management and social skills, this folder was made available to the tandems. The guidelines provided orientation to the participants and could also be used to take notes and document the content of the partnership.



Tandems (the mentee and mentor pairing) from the MigMENT mentoring program in Munich

Networking with the AMIGA project's cooperation partners also enabled important legal questions posed by the mentees to be answered. The participants were not left alone to look after themselves. On the contrary, they were free to approach the project team at any time. This team would then put them in touch with the appropriate contact persons. In addition, the mentoring program was complemented by an attractive sideline program that allowed tandems to use all other activities and actions in the AMIGA project. Examples include participation in the monthly social events and network events for the mentoring tandems.

Having got to know each other, the **tandem** worked together to develop the strengths and potential of the mentee, defining areas for improvement that could be useful to the mentee's ongoing career. Based on the identified strengths and interests, the mentor and mentee then drafted a strategy for the mentee's career development. For the duration of these partnerships, the mentees would also gradually build their professional network. Where the mentors were in agreement, mentees were also able to benefit from the mentors' contacts.

The first tandem was established in December 2013, and a total of 61 tandems had been successfully paired by December 31, 2014. When this publication was being produced, three mentees were still on the waiting list for matching. Seven individuals discontinued their participation in the MigMENT mentoring program for personal reasons. Since they did not respond to repeated inquiries, they were no longer taken into account in the matching process. In a number of cases, a lack of feedback made it difficult to stay in contact with mentees once partnerships had begun. The only way to maintain contact and elicit feedback was thus via the mentors.

Regrettably, the original plans to monitor the MigMENT program on the basis of monthly report sheets was not feasible, as mentees submitted their reports with insufficient regularity. For this reason, a two-week **online evaluation** was conducted when the deadline for mentees to register expired on December 31, 2014. To this end, an online questionnaire was circulated to participants in the MigMENT program. 27 mentees and 25 mentors completed and returned the questionnaire, equivalent to return rates of 44.3% and 58.1% respectively. The section below explains our assessment of the online evaluation.

At the time of the online evaluation in January 2015, the tandems had already been in existence for the following periods (see figure 11):

Duration of partnerships at the time of the online valuation (n = 27)

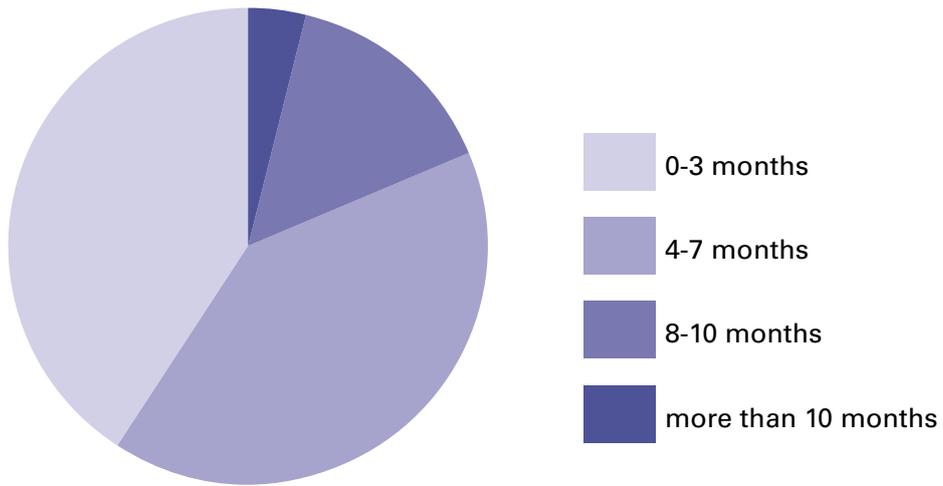


Figure 11: Duration of partnerships at the time of the online valuation

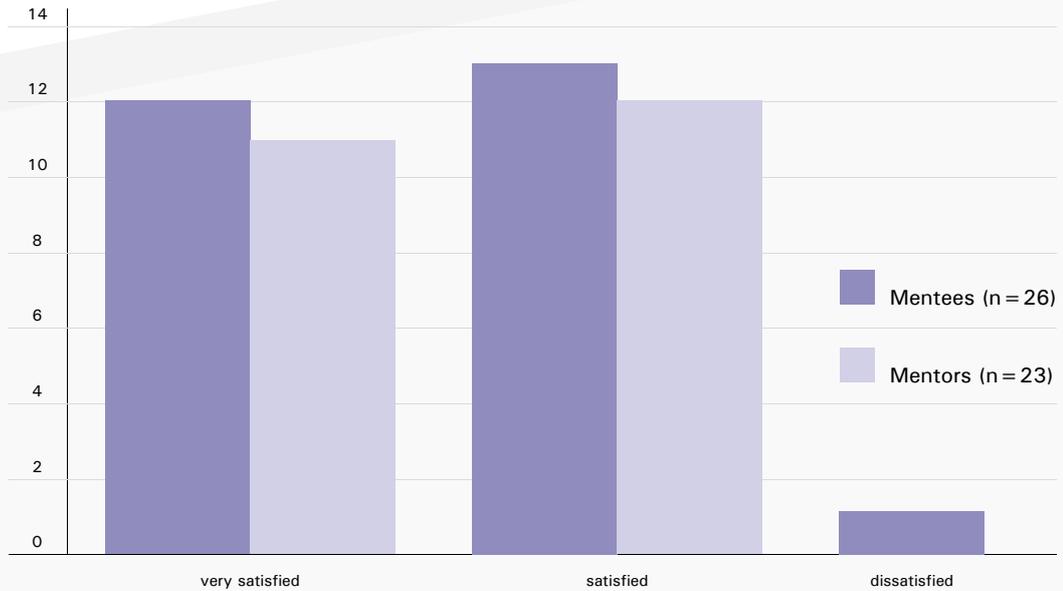


Figure 12: Levels of satisfaction with the MigMENT program

Most tandems (63%) met once a month. 22% met face to face twice a month. 7% met three times a month, and another 7% met four times a month. These face-to-face meetings were complemented by contact over the phone, by e-mail and via social media such as XING and WhatsApp.

The respondents’ feedback is very positive and confirms that the MigMENT was able to add value on both sides. 96% of the mentees who took part in the online evaluation were satisfied or very satisfied with the mentoring program. The mentors too provided a very positive echo. 48% of the mentors who took part in the evaluation were very satisfied, 52% said they were satisfied (see figure 12).

The success of the MigMENT program is underscored by the fact that, by February 2015, ten participants had already found **employment in keeping with their qualifications**. The table below lists the various aspects of the support provided.

Support received: The mentor ...	Mentions
... helped me to process my application documents	20
... gave me feedback about my personality	14
... gave me information about a certain occupation/profession	13
... gave me information about a certain industry	11
... practiced interview situations with me	10
... passed on his or her own contacts to me	6
... helped me to look for vacancies	5
... found me a job	3

**Table 10: Support received in the MigMENT program (n = 27, multiple answers possible)**

Mentees took advantage of indirect, preparatory support services only to a limited extent. The majority of the AMIGA mentees were in the 36+ age group and were under huge financial and time pressure. Due account should be taken of this circumstance when further developing and improving the MigMENT program. The project management team believes that support for these individuals could be provided more efficiently and effectively in a workshop setting than in tandems – especially as the evaluation showed that the application procedure and information about certain occupations and industries ranked among the most popular issues. These topics can be well addressed in special workshops. To do so, good use should be made of the knowledge and potential of the existing mentors.

If a mentoring program such as MigMENT is to succeed, it is vital to find out what mentees need and to clearly show what volunteer mentors – and indeed the entire project – can and cannot do. In some cases, mentees were unable to clearly communicate their expectations and the kind of support they needed. This made both matching and cooperation with the selected mentor difficult, at least to begin with.

When assessing the MigMENT program and the course taken by the partnerships, it is important to make due provision for the specific situation and needs of the mentees. Unlike the mentoring programs run by universities, which are attended exclusively by students, the MigMENT participants constituted a far more heterogeneous group in terms of sociodemographic attributes such as age and career experience.

The main difference between students as a target group and the AMIGA mentees is that, by taking part in university-run mentoring programs, students are preparing themselves in advance to launch a later career. By contrast, many AMIGA mentees are already gainfully employed but under financial pressure. For financial reasons, some have taken on underqualified work and cannot therefore take advantage of subsidized development and training offerings (including intensive language courses in particular). Others are unemployed and, due to their lack of financial resources, are likewise unable to make use of development and training offerings.

The fact that financial and time pressure is so common explains why these individuals tend to prefer direct offers of support such as job placement or access to the mentor's contacts. Critical feedback from mentees was mostly attributable to this kind of expectations (e.g. direct job placement via the mentor's personal contacts), which the project was unable to fulfill. This had never been the objective of the mentoring program, however, and the AMIGA team went to great lengths to stress the tasks, possibilities and limitations of the MigMENT program right from the outset.

In the MigMENT program, mentees were supported by experienced practitioners who passed on their knowledge of the Munich labor market and the peculiarities of application procedures and recruiting practices in Germany. Working together to produce written application documents and practicing and analyzing job interview situations gave the mentees a better understanding of and a better feel for application procedures in Germany. The mentors' years of career experience and expertise and the ability to share this in a partnership setting gave mentees the benefit of experience that will be valuable to them as to seek to rise to their own career challenges.

*"My mentor gave me a better insight into the application process in Germany."  
(mentee in the MigMENT program)*

*"It was really good to get sound advice, motivation and hope from our talks. I found looking for a job very stressful. But after every talk with my mentor, I felt hope again and thought: This is going to work!" (mentee in the MigMENT program)*

*"The mentees fitted in with thematic and personal areas in which I could help them. Selection took place in conjunction with the AMIGA project management. It was very calm and efficient." (mentor in the MigMENT program)*



Participants of MigMent-Meeting, Munich



AMIGA seminar about work and residence permits, Munich

## Munich: Seminars

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz*

The aim of the series of seminars was to communicate information about the Munich labor market, work permits, residence law and self-employment/starting a business, to answer the target groups' topical and urgent questions on these issues, to list relevant points of contact and to put interested parties in touch with the relevant institutions.

Depending on the topic, each seminar lasted roughly three hours, with a 20-minute break to facilitate informal networking among the participants. The seminars were each intended for about 15 to 25 participants, although larger groups were also accepted depending on the topic and demand. Information about the seminars was publicized mainly via the scouting campaign, on the project website, in the AMIGA newsletter and via the expert groups.

Demand for seminars on topics relating to the labor market was very brisk across all of the project's target groups. The seminars were developed and delivered as a collaborative venture between the AMIGA project management and cooperation partners. Feedback obtained from the target groups and the expert groups was channeled into the design of the seminars. 17 seminars were held between December 2013 and May 2015. A total of 107 people attended them (63 registered project participants and 44 who fell below the minimum threshold). Table 11 lists the topics addressed and the partners involved:

Seminar topic	No.	Organizations represented by the speakers
Labor market situation in Munich	1	Employment Agency Munich
Work and residence permits	4	Department of Public Order/Foreigners Office, City of Munich
Starting a business	3	Department of Labor and Economic Development/Munich Business Start-up Office
Application procedure/application training	9	AMIGA project management and mentors

Table 11: Topics addressed and partners involved in the AMIGA seminars

The seminars gave participants intensive opportunities to gather specific information. At the same time, feedback from participants enabled the AMIGA team to more clearly identify the target groups' needs and, as a result, tailor seminars more closely to these needs or develop new offerings. Examples of the latter included seminars for application procedures and application training, as well as the monthly AMIGA social events organized by the scouts. Close and intensive dialogue with the speakers ("professionals" and "locals") and contact with the AMIGA team before and after these events was especially important to the participants.

Cooperation between speakers from the various institutions was beneficial not only to the target groups, however, but also for the speakers themselves, who are keen to continue providing certain specific offerings (for students and third-country nationals, for example).

## Munich: Job fairs

*Ulrike Schulz*

Above and beyond the seminars and the mentoring program provided, some participants wanted to get even closer to the local labor market – for example by establishing contact with firms and benefiting from job placement. In response to this demand, the AMIGA team organized job fairs that gave participants a platform via which to contact companies directly.

In cooperation with the Munich branch of the Federal Employment Agency, two job fairs were held in the course of the project, one in July 2014 and one in February 2015. These job fairs targeted qualified migrants and international graduates of Munich universities. The Employment Agency Munich organized the employer-facing aspects of these events: enlisting companies, setting up the stands and organizing catering. A joint effort went into planning the content of presentations and publicizing the events among the target groups via the following channels:

- Written invitation to customers from the Employment Agency Munich
- Representatives of the network partners who took part in the AMIGA expert groups, e.g. the JobCenter Munich
- An assortment of newsletters: the City of Munich's business newsletter, the newsletter circulated by the MORGEN network of Munich migrants' organizations, the newsletter published by the the Office for Intercultural Affairs and the AMIGA newsletter
- Consulates, migrants' organizations and migrant advisory centers (e.g. the Foreign Residents Advisory Council)
- The project website and the scouting network

On the employers' side, 31 exhibitors represented the following industries: hospitality and gastronomy, engineering services, IP services, IT services, security, software engineering, transport and logistics, and insurance. The City of Munich also posi-



**AMIGA job fairs in Munich: A platform to contact companies directly**

tioned itself as an employer, offering specific vacancies. A number of personnel service providers were also in attendance.

These job fairs were flanked by a wealth of information and advice services from the Employment Agency Munich, the AMIGA project, the Chamber of Crafts and Small Industries for Munich and Upper Bavaria, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria and the City of Munich's Department of Public Order/Foreigners Office. The Employment Agency Munich also offered to check participants' application folders. In addition, a series of short presentations outlined the subsidy programs available to employers and employees, as well as explaining the key requirements for work and residence permits. In the context of moderated debates, participants reported on the MigMENT mentoring program, while representatives of industry discussed their experience of job seeking and the recruiting and employment of qualified migrants.

Visitors showed a keen interest in these events, which evidently meet a need among the target group. A total of about 1,000 visitors attended the two job fairs, with 728 individuals signing the list of participants (the minimum threshold) to document their participation. The short presentations were well frequented, as were the stands staffed by the advisory and information services and the application folder checking service. In the latter case, demand was at times so strong that not all visitors were able to cope with the resultant wait times.

According to the exhibitors' feedback, a good 80% of visitors belonged to the invited target group of highly qualified migrants. To evaluate the job fair concept, the exhibitors were asked to fill out a feedback sheet after each fair. 31 sheets were returned in this way and reflected decidedly positive feedback. Virtually all exhibitors (97%) rated the job fairs as a suitable forum in which to make contact with potential applicants in an informal atmosphere. 3% did not comment. 94% were able to engage in talks with people who would probably be suitable candidates. One exhibitor (3%) denied that this was the case, while another one (3%) said that this was "perhaps" the case.

Well over half (68%) of the companies in attendance said that they were able to reach concrete agreements with visitors to the job fairs. These included written ap-

plications, calls for interview and/or internships. 32% said that no concrete agreements were reached. In this context, it should be noted that some of the exhibitors were personnel service providers who initially added interested visitors to their pool of applicants.

The following answers were given to the question of what (other) benefits the exhibitors stood to gain from their participation in the AMIGA job fairs:

- Greater awareness among a suitable target group/opportunity to fill vacancies directly
- Improved awareness of the many and varied ways for people from other career backgrounds to join the company
- New recruits
- Improved awareness on the local labor market
- The opportunity to build networks/attract applicants
- An optimal opportunity to present the company to new and potential candidates
- Greater visibility/opportunity to demonstrate activities
- Greater visibility, reputation of the company and the industry in which it works
- Professional points of contact for applicants passed on to customers (personnel service providers)
- Qualified applicants to pass on
- Opportunity to recruit foreign candidates
- Chance to get to know many interested parties (around 35)
- Advertising for the company’s own brand/opportunity to recruit suitable candidates

The way the job fairs were organized also received positive assessments (58% were “very satisfied”, 42% were “satisfied”). At the same time, the feedback sheets also provided ideas to further develop and improve the event concept. These ideas included: adopting an industry focus, making appointments for candidates (to avoid crowds) and the possibility of also inviting ZAB, the Foreign Education Center.

Alongside the exhibitors, visitors to the second job fair in February 2015 were also asked to provide feedback about the event. There was no compulsion to fill out the feedback sheets, but a good quarter of the visitors did so. Visitors’ feedback too was positive (see table 12).

	I fully agree	I tend to agree	I tend to disagree	I disagree	No comment
The event was informative	36,2%	52,6%	10,3%	0,9%	–
I understood the content of the event	50,8%	43,1%	4,3%	0,9%	0,9%
I understood the language in which the event was held	58,6%	30,2%	7,8%	–	3,4%

Table 12: Feedback from visitors, produced by project staff (n= 116)

Visitors (n = 113) supplied the following information about their current career situation: 83% did not acquire their vocational or academic qualifications in Germany; 11% were graduates of a Munich university; 6% were currently studying at a Munich university.

Asked how they learned about the job fair (with multiple answers possible), 60% said "from the Employment Agency Munich". 24% said "from other channels" (friends, acquaintances, colleagues, education centers, newsletters, the Greek consulate, German classes, teachers and vocational training centers). 10% cited the AMIGA team as their source of information, 9% the JobCenter Munich and 7% posters and flyers.

## Munich: Additional new offerings

*Andra Barboni/Ulrike Schulz*

Across the board, participants rated the services offered by the AMIGA project (seminars, MigMENT and the job fairs) as attractive and helpful. In the course of project realization, however, it became apparent that people also had a need for additional labor market-related information and advice that was not covered by AMIGA's existing offerings.

Participants who approached the AMIGA team and wanted to take advantage of one of AMIGA's offerings or those of its cooperation partners often brought with them many more questions than had originally been assumed. Many individuals were struggling with a series of challenges to job placement: an inadequate command of German, huge gaps in their résumé, questions about self-employment or changing the direction of their career, and a simple lack of knowledge of the "German system". In the period from September 2013 through February 2015, the AMIGA office fielded more than 200 inquiries from people in need of advice, over and above the registered project participants. This led to a situation in which the AMIGA project unexpectedly provided certain **information and advisory services**.

Cooperation and networking activities with the AMIGA expert groups enabled the AMIGA team to quickly accumulate a wealth of knowledge that could be put to good use in the situations described above. Where AMIGA's own offerings were not enough to cover this demand, it was possible to put participants and people seeking advice on multiple issues in touch with the right departments and cooperation partners. These included migration advisory services, the Educational Advisory Service of the City of Munich, the Munich Business Start-up Office (MEB), the Guide project, and various providers of language courses, conversation classes and job application seminars.

As a result, the AMIGA project gradually grew to become an initial port of call to which cooperation partners too passed on potential participants. A tightly-meshed network was thus woven in which AMIGA assumed the function of first point of

contact or orientation. AMIGA gave participants an overview of the advisory landscape in Munich and passed them on to the right advisory centers and institutions to meet their specific needs. In part due to a lack of sufficient personnel, AMIGA itself did not provide in-depth individual advice.

To satisfy participants' substantial need for information, the scouts and project managers together produced two **special AMIGA publications** (in addition to the AMIGA newsletters) and circulated them via the e-mail distribution list. These special publications each addressed a specific topic and contained clearly structured and simply formulated information in response to questions that were asked repeatedly. The publication on the job application procedure in Germany included hints on writing cover letters and provided details of where readers could go to find more in-depth information. It also featured a list of "do's and don'ts", documented the most common mistakes made when applying for jobs, and discussed what employers expect of the image projected by applicants. A second publication focused on self-employment and contained details of the authorities to contact, help with finding information on the Internet, hints on networking (industry-specific networks and "industry newsletters") and a glossary of the key German (technical) terms in the process of launching a business.

Feedback from participants in the course of the project also revealed demand for (informal) networking meetings that could also promote dialogue within the target groups themselves. In response, the staff of the scouting campaign initiated AMIGA social events ("Stammtische") along the lines of the "picnics" held with participants by the project partner in Poznań.

The AMIGA team regularly attended the **AMIGA social events** (about once a month) together with AMIGA participants and anyone who was interested. At these events, topical issues and subjects were discussed, network links were forged and synergies between the participants were explored.

A total of nine such social events were held in the period from March 2014 to May 2015. The events were well received, as participants appreciated the chance to share experience and information with other migrants who were in a similar career situation and faced similar challenges. The informal setting in particular was welcomed, as it also opened the door to talk on other subjects above and beyond labor market-related topics.

## Summary of AMIGA activities

*Ulrike Schulz/Karolina Sydow/Magdalena Ziolek-Skrzypczak*

The above presentation of AMIGA's activities reveals similarities in the conceptual structure of the project in both Poznań and Munich (i.e. the way the work was split up into similar fields). Yet at the same time, it also reveals a wide spectrum of different focuses and approaches.

The following types of activities were undertaken in the AMIGA project in both cities:

- Activities that involved building local and transnational networks to foster cooperation and the sharing of experience
- Support activities that specifically targeted migrants

Due to the differences between the migrant situation in Munich, an old migration city, and Poznań, a new one, the AMIGA teams developed distinct ways of working in the expert groups, in approaching migrants and in offering support services.

The following points summarize characteristic features of AMIGA's work in both cities:

- **Expert groups:** The aim of expert groups in Poznań was, for the first time, to establish ongoing cooperation with various institutions that work with migrants. This would in turn help the groups to prepare offers of direct support for the three target groups and encourage awareness of necessary changes. Since hardly any cooperative networks existed among the institutions dealing with migrants before the project started, the expert groups brainstormed the needs of the target groups and organized the first support structure in the city, including the most important initial offerings such as Polish language courses and the Migrant Info Point.

One challenge to the AMIGA project in Munich was to work within existing structures and seek to establish cooperation between different institutions working with migrants. To this end, it set up three expert groups corresponding to the three target groups. The work of these groups helped the project identify migrants' current situation, but also helped develop recommendations for many integration stakeholders/actors in the city.

- **Reaching out:** Since the numbers of migrants differs significantly in the two cities, the concept of reaching out had to be adjusted to local conditions and peculiarities. One very important aspect of street work in Poznań involved providing individual support (e.g. by serving as interpreters and cultural assistants, accompanying migrants on their visits to local government offices and other institutions). Another was contacting migrant communities and informing them about AMIGA's offerings. The street workers deployed in Poznań were themselves Polish nationals. As such, their work was perceived as a sign of openness and support for migrants from the host society.

In Munich, the main priority was for the scouting campaign to reach out to the numerous migrant communities already in existence. Since the city already has a fair number of integration initiatives for migrants run by German organizations, AMIGA aimed to involve migrants in the AMIGA teamwork. The fact that the scouts themselves had a migration background enabled them to build bridges between AMIGA and the target groups. However, the scouting campaign could not focus as much on individual support as on informing as many migrants as possible about AMIGA's offerings and the other integration services available in the city.

- **Offerings:** The Migrant Info Point (MIP) was the core AMIGA activity in Poznań. It became a kind of one-stop shop for newcomers, allowing them to find not only information about the labor market, but also up-to-date news on aliens law in Poland and information about living and working conditions and daily life in the city. Direct support for job seekers and migrants keen to start a business belonged to a separate group of complementary activities, along with language courses. In addition, the positive image campaign marked a breakthrough by raising the local community's awareness of the presence and contribution made by migrants to local society.

By contrast, the aim of AMIGA's activities in Munich was to offer migrants services that complemented those already available from other organizations in the city. These services centered solely around integration in the local labor market and responded to the identified and unmet needs of the target groups. Despite the existence of many integration initiatives in the city, the target groups' keen interest in the AMIGA offerings (the MigMENT mentoring program, job fairs and seminars) showed that there is still no shortage of demand for services to help migrants become integrated in the labor market.

All cross-cutting issues and differences in organizing and running the project in the old and new migration cities proved a useful learning experience for the teams in both Poznań and Munich. This experience has prepared the ground on which to develop project recommendations that will hopefully prove useful to other cities in other European countries.

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- 1) The congress will be held after publication of this report.
  - 2) In 2014, Agata Kochaniewicz was granted the highest award of the City of Poznań for her outstanding MA thesis on migrant labor entitled *Imigranci zarobkowi w sektorze usługowo-gastronomicznym w Poznaniu: strategie migracyjne i integracyjne* [Migrant labor in the service and gastronomy sector in Poznań: migration and integration strategies]
  - 3) To safeguard the anonymity of the individual migrants, fictitious names are used in these genuine case studies.



5

**AMIGA recommendations**

*Karolina Sydow/Magdalena Ziolek-Skrzypczak*

Sharing existing practices and policy solutions on how to better manage strategies to support the integration of migrants in the labor market is a good way to offer practical suggestions to integration policy-makers, industry and local practitioners. The AMIGA project is keen to stimulate any and all progress in precisely these areas. It is hoped that the following closing remarks and recommendations, rooted in our experience of the AMIGA project, will encourage the development of better migrant integration strategies and lead to the review and adaptation of existing ones.

The project findings outlined below are based on the research conducted and practical experience gained by the AMIGA teams, as well as the work done by the project's expert groups in both cities. This chapter groups the findings into two sections: The first discusses the international transferability of certain best practices and project conclusions. The second gathers those best-practice solutions and recommendations that lend themselves to application in either new or old migration cities, but not in both. Lastly, the value of European dialogue and experience sharing with regard to migrant integration is summarized in the outlook for similar cooperation projects.



Sharing experiences about integration of qualified migrants in the local labor market

### **Integration support strategies on the local labor market that could be further developed and recommended to other new and old migration cities in the EU**

The best-practice examples and suggestion for improvements grouped together below are of relevance to activities conducted on behalf of all migrant groups, regardless of their position on the labor market. Some of these recommendations are also based on practices that were missing from the project but should, in our view, be implemented in the future. These generally applicable examples are followed by a couple of models for activities addressed to specific target groups.

#### **Support for all target groups**

The following general points about the organization and development of activities for all target groups and about methods of reaching the target groups and building networks are believed to be worthy of consideration, implementation and further development. In effect, they constitute a recommended “to-do-list”:

##### **■ Organizing activities**

- Focus on developing specific offerings. Do not try to plan activities for all migrants at once, as this can cause time and manpower capacity to grow very thin.
- Take account of the heterogeneous nature of the target group and break the target group down into categories based on specific attributes (such as qualifications, system expertise and language skills). This is important for the development of offerings and to be able to reach out to the target group effectively.
- Where appropriate, develop certain offerings in several languages. Lay out print materials in all relevant places and cultivate awareness of the topic.
- Think carefully about what ingredients are needed in communication with the target group. What language should be used? Should events be branded as “for migrants” or not? It is important to strike the right balance between mainstream events and tailor-made offerings to ensure that none of the groups (neither migrants nor non-migrants) feel discriminated against.

- Increase awareness among institutions and, above all, among those individuals who deal with the target group. Each institution should appoint a main contact person to field questions relating to the target group.
- Plan offers that are free of charge, but at the same time try to think about ensuring a certain degree of commitment among the target group if your activity is long-termed. Think about how to monitor this commitment. As the experience of the MigMENT program shows, it is also worth considering whether (stricter) conditions should be imposed at the start of the program to prevent feedback from being submitted irregularly or not at all.
- Clearly communicate the purpose and possibilities of activities right from the outset to avoid misunderstandings. (AMIGA, for example, was often falsely thought to be an employment agency.)

#### ■ Reaching out

- Lay out print materials in all relevant places and cultivate awareness of the topic (in several languages, where appropriate).
- Where does the target group look for offerings? Analyze people's information-gathering habits. Which websites do they look on? Which public authorities do they contact? Where do they turn for help if they can't find the right information?
- As both street workers in Poznań and scouts in Munich confirmed, an individually tailored approach to migrants is very important and is highly valued. Try to recruit enough migrant community insiders who will not only spread the news about support activities to as many migrants as possible, but will also take time to focus on each case on its own merits – both the challenges and the untapped potential.
- Raise awareness in the local community about the presence of migrants in society, their potential and what they contribute. This can be done on two levels: via decision-makers (from the top down, e.g. through intercultural training for local government officials) and via grass-roots society (from the bottom up, e.g. through more formal methods such as positive image and media campaigns, and through less formal channels such as Facebook).
- Appoint an international team to foster the target group's trust in integration service providers. Try to recruit people with a migration background who know best how to approach certain migrant communities (either as paid co-workers or as volunteers). The more of these mediators you have, the more efficient your program will be.

#### ■ Cooperation and networking

- Establish a model for long-term collaboration between local institutions dealing with migrants. It is important that the representatives of institutions who are active in this area have not only personal enthusiasm and eagerness to cooperate, but are also backed by (or will strive to gain the backing of) their organization, including the allocation of sufficient time and resources.
- Networks such as AMIGA's expert groups yielded positive outcomes in terms of closer cooperation and mutual support among organizations that were



**Support for specific target groups, e.g. via seminars about the local labor market situation**

unaware of each other before the project began. It is recommended that they should also inform the target groups of the nature and existence of services provided by network partners.

- Expert groups proved a valuable source of expertise and knowledge for the scouting and street work campaigns, yet even greater openness was needed and recommended. Try to get your partner organizations to understand the invaluable role played by contact with migrants through such mediators.
- Contacts with chambers of commerce and industry and employers' associations likewise provide very valuable support. Organizing job fairs for international professionals was a good way to reaching out to companies that already have an interest in employing migrants. By the same token, they could also open the door to other businesses with less experience in this area.
- Integrate the target group. It is hugely important to sit down and talk to the target group. This lets them know that they are being taken seriously and thus cultivates trust. Conversely, it also makes you more aware of their needs, opinions and challenges.
- Solicit feedback from the target groups and invite them to meetings of the expert groups and other networks. This helps ensure that project activities are run not only for but with the involvement of the target groups.
- Regular informal gatherings with target groups (such as the "Stammtische" or "picnics" organized in Munich and Poznań respectively) could be made even more attractive to participants if representatives of the cooperation partners also took part. In an informal setting, these representatives could participate as guests, providing an overview of the services and offerings they provide in their specific area of expertise, answering participants' questions and making recommendations.
- Strengthen and develop collaboration with other new and old migration cities in your country and with other European partners in order either to learn innovative practices or benchmark the development of your support services.

## Support for specific target groups

Some of the conclusions drawn from the AMIGA project are applicable to services for all the target groups addressed (see above). Others are more specific, responding to particular challenges. The following models for activities can be recommended in reference to specific target groups.

### ■ **(Qualified) Migrants with job placement challenges**

Migrants have been found to face a wide range of job placement challenges.

As a result, support strategies must involve comprehensive forms of advice and usually require direct support. The following activities are recommended in this regard:

#### **Advice for migrants from a group of experts** (job advisors, lawyers, psychologists):

Advisory services are not one-time act of giving support, but a long-term process. It therefore makes sense to combine different kinds of support, including:

- Job advice along the lines of that provided by AMIGA in Poznań, but with more time allowed for individual advisory sessions
- Advice on legal issues relating to the local labor market, work permits, starting a business and procedures at employment agencies
- Support from psychologists who have intercultural training (where appropriate).

**Cycles of workshops** focusing on special job sectors, application procedures, corporate culture, acculturation and job seeking: Job application training in particular is considered to be of crucial importance. Many of the courses currently available are not adapted to migrants needs. Even highly qualified migrants may be unaware of the host country's cultural habits and norms in national corporations. Issues such as how to write letters of application and how to prepare for interviews should thus be discussed in training courses held with managers, local government officials or other public sector employees, or in a group advisory context. This approach would give individual advisory sessions more time to discuss other issues in greater depth. As the MigMENT mentoring program in Munich showed, certain qualified individuals are happy to commit to such activities voluntarily. Our recommendation is therefore to create a pool of engaged individual professionals who are willing and able to lead such workshops or form advisory groups.

**Information packages for migrants and employers:** It is of a great importance to inform both migrants and employers about the laws that govern the labor market and the opportunities available on it. This information should be available in several languages.

**Advice for employers, group training, diversity awards:** As many representatives of the expert groups agreed and the AMIGA job fairs proved, there is a strong need to organize advisory sessions for employers, especially for small and

medium-sized enterprises, dealing with regulations that apply to the recruiting of migrants and the recognition of foreign qualifications. These sessions could take place either in the form of group training workshops at the companies themselves or as individual advisory meetings in the office of the advisor. Media activities such as diversity awards for companies could also raise awareness and nurture employers' interest in an international workforce.

**Intercultural training and language courses for case managers and other employees at employment agencies:** Employees at employment agencies need to be prepared for contact with migrants. Every agency should have several staff who are able to supply basic information in several languages, or at the very least in English. Intercultural training and language courses could help prepare officials for contact with potential "customers" from different countries.

■ **International university graduates and students**

The support strategies for this group of migrants are often considered to be part of the responsibility of local universities. However, some traditional universities still do not see themselves as the organizations that should prepare graduates for job placement in keeping with their qualifications. They see their own mission rather as educating people for a scientific or academic career, which is only possible for a minority of future graduates. It is high time to change this perspective. International students and international graduates from local universities constitute a considerable potential resource that should not be overlooked by local authorities and chambers of commerce and industry. Indeed, the openness of both new and old migration cities to students from abroad should be backed up by their future high potentials on the local labor markets. AMIGA started to work out best solutions for this target not only in cooperation with universities, but also with other institutions within the expert groups. As a result, we recommend that the following activities be implemented.

**Cooperative network involving universities, local authorities and student associations/unions:** We strongly recommend that universities' existing offerings for international students and graduates proposed should be publicized more widely so that the target group can make more frequent use of them. Of great importance is a commitment to this effect not only on the part of universities, but also on the part of the local authorities, student associations and other relevant organizations that have contact with this target group. This cooperation should not be restricted solely to promoting the internationalization of the city and its universities. It should also assume responsibility for the situation of international students and graduates in the city and their future prospects on the labor market. Existing services and demand for more offerings should be discussed and worked out by all these organizations working together. It is important that new ideas complement existing offerings rather than competing with them. If this goal is to be reached, transparency among all network members is crucial.

**Orientation days, workshops at universities and job fairs for international professionals:** Both for the target groups and for employers who are struggling to find the best talents for their companies, this kind of event can be very useful and informative. It is important to reach out to international students at the place where they study, providing information – in the language of the host country and in English – on how to legalize their stay and work after graduation, the legal aspects of employment procedures and available job opportunities. It would also be useful to inform the target groups about any other events and activities in the city that might help them find adequate employment. Job fairs for international professionals could become a regular event in cities that are open not only to international students but also to international graduates.

**Intensive courses in the language of the host country:** Studying in English is becoming increasingly common throughout the EU. However, the fact that more and more courses are delivered in English can make it difficult for international students to assess the importance and value of fluency in the language of the host country, too. It is recommended that such language courses should be offered free of charge, and that foreign students whose communication and writing skills are still inadequate should be strongly encouraged or even obliged to attend them. These courses could, for example, be part of curricula designed for full-time students in either local-language or English systems; and this may in turn lead or encourage these students to stay on and work in the city where they studied. At the present time, a huge discrepancy exists in both old and new migration cities between internationalized systems of study and domestic labor market needs. The latter is still often focused on communication in the local language.

**Fostering contact with local students, mentors and potential employers:** Another important activity that makes international students feel more integrated in and familiar with the language of the host country is contact with the host population, especially local students, as well as contact with the local business community. It is not always easy to establish this kind of contact, and it is not uncommon for international students to surround themselves with other students who share their migration background. As attractive as the cultural programs run by universities' international offices are to international students, they should nevertheless also seek to involve other (non-international) students and ideally cooperate with university careers centers whose services, like mentoring programs, may be still unknown. Another crucial factor that influences international students' decision about whether to stay on in the country after graduation is how they perceive their opportunities on the labor market. It is therefore advisable for students to start looking around before they complete their studies. One valuable source of information would be databases maintained by university careers centers providing information about employers who offer internships and jobs. Another valuable instrument would be the assistance of a trustworthy mentor.

**International university dropouts:** Last but not least, the potential of international university dropouts has yet to be discussed. Although this issue is outside the focus of the AMIGA project, the members of the expert groups stressed a strong need to target these international professionals-to-be who, for whatever reasons, have been unable to complete their academic qualifications. We would therefore strongly recommend that surveys be conducted and support programs developed for this group as well.

■ **Migrant entrepreneurs**

Uncertainty about the legal issues involved in and the authorities responsible for business start-ups can often discourage people from taking the first steps into self-employment. The following recommendations would offer more encouragement and direct support:

**One-stop agency:** A single agency means bundled information. To avoid confusion about who is responsible for all the different issues relating to new business start-ups, every city should have a central instance where migrants who are potential entrepreneurs can get all the information they need and find out what steps they must take, where they must go etc. This could also be a multilingual online platform. As an alternative to a one-stop agency, the employees of local advisory organizations for start-ups should undergo special training on the specific needs and challenges of migrant entrepreneurs.

**Three-phase communication strategy model:** Drawing on the experience of AMIGA’s expert groups in Munich,<sup>1</sup> a focused communication strategy model depending on the current phase in which the target group finds itself is also recommended:

1. The target group is still in the country of origin.
2. Members of the target group have just arrived in the host city and/or are having trouble with the language.
3. The target group is taking action to become self-employed and has achieved a measure of fluency in the language.

Structuring the flow of information – Phase 1: The migrant is still in his/her country of origin and plans to start a business in a new host city. Problem: Lack of knowledge.

<p>Provide local-language information about starting a business in the host country → Concentrate on systemic differences</p>	<p>Roughly outline the necessary steps in implementation (formalities) and list the departments that must be approached</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Medium: Internet</li> <li>● Issue: Which websites do people use? How do they look, and what are they looking for? (information-gathering habits)</li> </ul>
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Figure 13: Phase 1 of the three-phase model: Entrepreneur still in his/her country of origin

In this case, it is important to involve relevant players and multipliers in both the countries of origin and in the host city. Examples include chambers of commerce, diplomatic missions (consulates), migrants’ organizations, universities etc.

- This is true especially with regard to the provision of information in the relevant local languages (translation). Another issue is that migrants in their home countries sometimes do not know which websites they can use to search for this information.
- Effect: A clear understanding of what is needed to start a business in the host country. This enables individuals to make informed decisions about whether or not to start.

Structuring the flow of information – Phase 2: The migrant entrepreneur is new in the host country/city. Problem: No orientation, no knowledge of local practices/factors.

From a central instance, entrepreneurs receive information (also available in English) about the next steps and who to contact	Entrepreneurs take advantage of advice, information events, info on local factors, industry-specific information	Objective: To provide orientation, transparency and focused support and information
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**Figure 14: Phase 2 of the three-phase model: Entrepreneur already in/newly arrived in the host country**

- Key topics should be: formalities, business plan, premises/offices, legal forms, funding, networks, industry information, social insurance etc.
- A (non-exclusive) list of or guide to relevant information points should be compiled. In Munich, for example, such a list would include: Department of Public Order, Munich Business Start-Up Office (MEB), Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chamber of Skilled Crafts, Institute for Liberal Professions (IfB), guide (an advisory and support project for female entrepreneurs), Federal Employment Agency, local job centers and universities. It is important to ensure that relevant institutions and information offerings are communicated from a single, central source.
- Please note: The institutions themselves must be made aware of this need and must talk to each other. Each case should be examined on its own merits (there is no “right” concept). Storytelling should be encouraged (based on models/examples). All information should be available in English as a minimum requirement.

Structuring the flow of information – Phase 3: The entrepreneur with a migration background is going ahead and become self-employed. Problem: Access to industry networks is difficult.

<p>Entrepreneur has prepared a business plan and is beginning to put it into practice. Problem: No access to relevant networks, lack of knowledge</p>	<p>Communication of industry-specific network contacts, industry events, establishment of contact with venture capital firms, for example</p>	<p>Appointment of community managers to simplify integration in industry networks</p>
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**Figure 15: Phase 3 of the three-phase model: Entrepreneur starting to act on plans for self-employment**

- Community managers represent the interests of migrants who are keen to start businesses. They provide access or simplify access to the relevant industry networks. Community managers themselves work in the industry, are well connected and have a migration background. They know the needs of the target group and draw on their own experience to provide help. They provide useful guidance and orientation within the individual industries.
- Entrepreneurs can learn lessons from a role model. They are highly motivated (“we can do it!”), can gain access to industry networks under “simplified” conditions and can thus become integrated more quickly.
- Community managers should be recruited from networks across the individual institutions. Multipliers from migrant organizations, associations and networks should be involved in identifying community managers.

### Labor market support strategies recommended for either old or new migration cities

Not all findings of the AMIGA project translate into recommendations that are valid for all cities, irrespective of their local peculiarities. Dialogue and experience sharing between the Polish and German cities in this project led to specially adapted support strategies that could be useful and should be applied in either new or old migration cities, but not in both. While certain existing structures in old migration cities need to be reviewed, specified in greater detail and/or harmonized, the lack of any structures at all in new migration cities can be seen as an opportunity to build centralized and more efficient systems of support from the very beginning.

The following table summarizes the main points in this section:

New migration cities	Old migration cities
One-stop agency (such as the MIP) as the first port of call	Overview of existing services and orientation/clearing center
Beginners' language courses for migrants	Language courses for professional purposes
Expert groups to design new offerings and assume responsibility for activities	Expert groups to identify existing needs and draft plans for joint activities
Advisory group to the city government	Involvement of successful migrants as role models in support services
Bottom-up initiatives that give an incentive to local government	Top-down initiatives that integrate bottom-up projects

**Table 13: Labor market support strategies recommended for either old or new migration cities**

In the new migration cities, the primary concern is that it is hard, if not impossible, to organize the structure of support on the labor market alone, in isolation from other important issues such as the legalization of status, education and housing, few of which are specifically addressed by other organizations in the city. It therefore makes sense for integration in the local labor market to be part and parcel of a more comprehensive initial integration package for newcomers. Following the example of Poznań's Migrant Info Point as a one-stop shop for many different matters (including job advice) seems to be the ideal solution. By contrast, the challenge in old migration cities is avoid duplicating offerings and to make them available in one place. Creating an overview of existing services turned to be a top priority for all the target groups in Munich. Theoretically, information could be bundled at a single orientation or clearing center, which could assess the challenges facing individual migrants and refer them to relevant services and programs.

One of the first crucial steps toward integration in the labor market is a mastery of the host country's language. In new migration cities, it may still be uncommon to offer language courses free of charge for migrants. That is precisely why it is crucial to organize such service from the very beginning. Old migration cities, on the other hand, should prepare a catalogue of existing courses and find out whether there are any gaps. With regard to the integration of qualified migrants, it is espe-

cially important to review and, where necessary, add to the offerings of language courses for professional purposes, ideally linking them to a few weekly hours of practical experience in companies (on-the-job learning).

Expert groups have proven to be a good channel via which to encourage networking between different institutions that support migrants and foster their integration in the labor market. With regard to new migration cities, we recommend that experts should be recruited with a view to the future contribution they can make to the organization of new services. In other words, the experts selected should represent those organizations that are eager to design new support services and lead different aspects of the one-stop agency function described above.

In old migration cities, the members of expert groups may well already know each other from past meetings on the subject of migrant integration and other networks. Yet even if this is the case, it still makes sense to first define the precise content and objectives of regular expert group meetings. One option would be to focus on concrete activities that the various cooperation partners are currently implementing. Ideally, it would then be possible to plan and agree joint activities in this context.

As a general rule, the involvement of migrants in decision-making processes at local government level and at the levels where integration services are organized was found to be necessary in both Poznań and Munich. Setting up a group of migrants as an advisory body to the city council and the mayor would thus be advisable in new migration cities. In old migration cities, where councils of foreign nationals may already exist, it is recommended first and foremost to focus on the involvement of individual migrants in organizing and providing new services. These individuals would represent successful qualified migrants on the labor market and serve as role models. They could also lead business talks with migrants on specific professional issues or run workshops on starting a business and/or marketing matters.

Lastly, it is important to note that, in new migration cities where local government has so far done little to encourage migrant integration, bottom-up initiatives should play an important role in setting up and organizing those integration services that are needed most. As the AMIGA project in Poznań showed, it is advisable for this to be done in cooperation with and not in opposition to the local government. Strictly speaking, it is the responsibility of local authorities to provide such services. It is therefore hoped that the success of projects such as AMIGA in Poznań will raise awareness and encourage local governments to become more deeply involved in migration issues. Only then the sustainability of such bottom-up projects be ensured.

On the other hand, in old migration cities where many bottom-up initiatives already exist (such as the AMIGA project in Munich), it is crucial to integrate bottom-up actors who often compete with each other, as doing so will strengthen both their cooperation and their impact.

## European cooperation and outlook for the future

Ultimately, despite differing national and local contexts for the integration of migrants in the labor market in the two AMIGA partner cities, the transnational sharing of research and practical experience by the project managers should prove to be a valuable source of potential solutions to common challenges faced by policymakers and organizers of support for migrants in both new and old migration cities throughout the EU. Surprisingly, the very incongruity of these European case studies may reveal many common aspects of policymaking processes at the local level and in practical integration work. Some good practices may turn out to be transferable, while others will still remain in the realms of unachievable goals. Notwithstanding, pan-European dialogue between researchers and practitioners certainly helps to raise awareness of those integration challenges that have not yet been (sufficiently) recognized by local governments and/or local integration service providers. It is hoped that the networks of expert groups and AMIGA activities in both cities will be continued within the framework of similar European cooperation projects. The mutual inspiration, lessons learned and recommendations submitted in this report should ideally be put into practice in the two cities and become a source of inspiration to others.

Lastly, when discussing strategies to support migrant integration in the labor market, it is important to remember that we are still talking about services by and for people, and that each migrant has his or her own personal history, character and capabilities. The focus should always be on approaching each case on its own merits. Even then, however, no integration strategy can guarantee success. It can only invite both host cities and migrants to work together. Our hope is that this active approach to the labor market on the part of both sides may turn out to be beneficial to both social integration and the local economy in the cities of Europe.

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1) The model was designed by Alexander Vatovac, who coordinated expert group 3 (migrant entrepreneurs in Munich).

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# Appendix 1

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# Appendix 2

## Local Partners

### Munich

1. Bavarian Industry Association (VBW)
2. Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria
3. Chamber of Skilled Crafts for Munich and Upper Bavaria
4. City of Munich's Center of Educational and Vocational Counselling
5. City of Munich's Department of Public Order
6. City of Munich's Social Services Department
7. Caritasverband der Erzdiözese München und Freising e.V.  
(Diocesan Caritas Association for Munich and Freising)
8. Employment Agency Munich
9. get2gether, Student Network Initiative Munich
10. Infozentrum Migration und Arbeit AWO (Migration and Employment Information Center)
11. Institute on Liberal Professions at the Friedrich Alexander University (FAU) Erlangen-Nuremberg
12. Integrationsberatungscentren Beruf (Integration Advice Centers – Vocation)
13. Integrationsberatungscentren Sprache & Beruf (Integration Advice Centers – Language & Vocation)
14. Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) Munich
15. MORGEN Network of Munich-Based Migrants' Organizations
16. Münchner Volkshochschule GmbH (Munich Adult Education Center)
17. Munich JobCenter
18. Munich Student Union
19. Munich University of Applied Sciences (MUAS)
20. Technische Universität München (TUM)

## **Poznań**

1. Academic and Scientific Poznań Program, City Development Department, Poznań City Hall
2. Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU) in Poznań
3. Association for Legal Intervention in Warsaw (SIP)
4. Citizens' Affairs Department, Poznań City Hall
5. Department of Citizens' and Foreign Nationals' Affairs (FODCFA), Voivodship of Wielkopolska
6. Deutsch-Polnisches Büro (German-Polish Office)
7. District Employment Agency
8. District Employment Agency in Poznań
9. Health and Social Issues Department, Poznań City Hall
10. Municipal Family Social Assistance Center (MOPR)
11. Dutch-Polish Chamber of Commerce in Poznań
12. Polish Migration Forum Foundation, Warsaw
13. Poznań University of Economics
14. Poznań University of Technology
15. The Regional Center of Social Policy (ROPS)
16. Training and Advisory Center, Business Activity and Agriculture Department, Poznań City Hall
17. University of Arts in Poznań
18. Voivodship Labor Office in Poznań (WUP)
19. Wielkopolski Capital Club (WKK)

# Appendix 3

## Notes on the definition of “migration background”

The following explanatory notes are quoted directly from the City of Munich’s Integration Report 2013, which was published in German only:

### “Spotlight: Migration background

The City of Munich defines migration background as follows:

a) Foreign nationals

This is a legal term indicating that a person does not possess German nationality. It has nothing to do with the length of time a person has spent in Germany (or the length of time their family has spent in Germany over several generations).

b) Germans with a migration background

These are people who possess German nationality and who migrated to Germany after 1955 for reasons of resettlement/relocation, labor migration, family reunion or flight. They also include individuals of whom at least one parent migrated to Germany after 1955, such as children of binational marriages and children who must choose their nationality when they reach the age of majority, for example.

This definition corresponds broadly to that used in the microcensus as of 2005. Munich’s data are therefore readily comparable with those of the microcensus.

The Munich definition does deviate in one point from the microcensus, but this deviation has only a negligible impact. Whereas the 2005 Microcensus Act specifies 1950 as the cut-off point for migration, the City of Munich uses 1955, as envisaged by the 2011 Census Act. The intention of both cut-off points is to permit a distinction between later migrants and migrants who were refugees and displaced persons following World War II. In the latter case, the adaptation of living conditions can reasonably be assumed. From Munich’s perspective, 1955 – the year of the first recruitment agreement (with Italy) – is the more logical choice.

In many areas, however, only data about nationality are available, whereas data on citizenship is indispensable in many cases in order to project future time series.

The Munich Office of Statistics uses “keys” to analyze migration backgrounds, making data about Munich’s population available based on analysis of the population register on its ZIMAS database (ZIMAS).”

Source: City of Munich, Social Services Department, the Office for Intercultural Affairs (eds.) 2013, p. 41ff.

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