

REFUGEE FAMILIES

Making family life possible

Central findings of a two year
discussion process

Short introduction

AGF ■ Arbeitsgemeinschaft
■ der deutschen
■ Familienorganisationen e.V.

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Deutscher Familienverband e.V. (DFV)



evangelische arbeitsgemeinschaft familie e.V. (eaf)



Familienbund der Katholiken e.V. (FDK)



Verband alleinerziehender Mütter und Väter e.V. (VAMV)



Verband binationaler Familien und Partnerschaften e.V. (iaf)

→ <https://en.ag-familie.de/>

Short introduction



BUNDESFORUM
FAMILIE

→ <https://bundesforum-familie.de/about-us/>

Main source

- Central findings of a two year discussion
- Mainly involving professionals from:
 - child and youth welfare
 - family education
 - family politics
 - science / researchers

→ Download: <http://bit.ly/2WO4Lih>



Main content

1. Access of refugee children and young adults to regular educational programs
2. Young refugees and their families in child and youth welfare
3. Family reunification of refugees

Inclusion vs. special support

- There are many dimensions that potentially might produce „social exclusion“ – being refugee is one of them
- Lessons learned from (disability) inclusion debate: Separate systems to individually support special groups are meant well, but still questioned to be the best approach
- There is an opposition between „universal“ and „particular“ – resolution is not easy:
 - Special needs and support by particular groups not to be ignored -> those can be diverse and be a big challenge for the public systems
 - Regular education programs have to have inclusion as general approach to reach out to all families
 - At the same time education and administration management systems have to orient themselves closer towards the needs of refugees
 - → to reassure same access to education and help systems for everyone

Who is „we“?

- Where does inclusion stop, where does adaption start? What ist meant by integration?
- Host society is not homogenous, but diverse
- Adaption / integration takes place in a changing host society
- Values do matter
- Values may differ when it comes to education, role of gender, inner-familial processes, models of partnerships, raising children:
- Challenge for people in courts, support and education systems is to tolerate and appreciate some and to define, where it stops

Old problems made public

- Many challenges came along, but:
 - → are they really new?
 - structural changes / reforms have been needed for years
 - → Now it's public
 - Deficits in child and youth welfare as well as in education system brought to light
- There also have been positive effects: encrusted structures were modified, softened and realigned
- New networks and cooperations found
- → positive effects have to be strengthened, kept and try to spill over to other areas
- Especially interfaces have to be looked at to better interlink life sections like education, health, neighbourhoods etc.
- Professionals have to be trained to be able to and need enough time to do it

What about Volunteers?

- Volunteers have been a massive support to overcome the challenges, to help and to integrate refugees
- But it is ambivalent:
 - great work that should be even more supported, for instance by professional coordination, training etc.
 - but it can't and shouldn't replace the work of professionals

What next?

- Money has been put into the system because of refugee families
- But it was mostly put into projects and short term measures
- Now needed to look at the systems at such: Qualifying professionals; structural changes
- Lack of professionals massive (best laws and structures useless when nobody there to do the work)
- Fluctuation of professionals: Short term projects (→ contracts), not enough respect for their job, payment, further training on the job

Conclusion

- There is a right for everyone to live a family life – also for refugee families: more enthusiasm has to be put into family reunification
- the child rights perspective has to be given more emphasize
- refugee families are diverse – just as families in the host society. This has to be acknowlegded
- a cultural sensitive attitude is needed by the professionals

Thank you!