

JOB-TURBO – FAST LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES

Sarah Jahjah

University of Library Studies and Information Technologies

Abstract: Job-turbo, intended for the labor market integration of refugees, is a program of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS). The primary goal of this program is a speedy and, at best, permanent employment or vocational training of refugees. Job-turbo in terms of job placement takes effect immediately after completing the integration course. The starting signal for the job-turbo was given at the federal press conference on October 18, 2023 by the Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs Hubertus Heil, Andrea Nahles, and Daniel Terzenbach.

Keywords: job-turbo, labour market, refugees, politics.

Introduction

Job-turbo is intended to ensure that people who have fled to Germany are integrated into the labour market more quickly and as permanently, as possible. The following article discusses the question of what citizens might expect with the introduction of job-turbo.

The measures adopted are aimed at all refugees who have completed integration courses and are being supervised by job centres. Hence, affected are people from Ukraine, as well as refugees from other countries of origin. The action plan adopted by the federal government has effect primarily on work in job centres. Job-turbo is intended to ensure that all refugees, who have completed the integration course, have access to work. The refugees are therefore closely supported by the job centres during the upcoming integration steps. During this phase, job centres intensify contact with graduates of the integration courses and help them find a job as quickly as possible in order to gain work experience. Additionally, job centres are required to offer further language learning and qualifications if such need is arises. The acquired professional experience is intended to deepen language skills (1). The Federal Ministry of Labour and the Federal Employment Agency or Job Centre are therefore implementing the measures analysed later with the aim of accelerating the integration process for refugees.

Research methodology

The purpose of this article is to systematically analyse existing published information and knowledge. In the context of research methods, this is a type of

literature analysis. In principle, a literature analysis can be described as a summary of existing knowledge. Topic of such research projects are already published works that are being examined with regard to a specific question. The added value of the above-mentioned literature analyses results from the accumulation and systematic consideration of existing works on the topic. First, the current state of research and information is reviewed; finally, a look into the future is taken.

Results/Findings

In the meantime, Germany is experiencing a shortage of skilled workers, which fortunately cannot yet be described as nationwide. However, it is essential that government measures be taken to counteract further worsening of the problem. According to the BMAS (Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), there was a shortage of around 23,100 skilled workers in social work professions in 2022. Similarly, a shortage of 22.5000 skilled workers in childcare and education was reported. This means that the largest shortage of skilled workers in the German labour market is in the social sector (2).

In response, with the new version of § 3 of Book II of the Code of Social Law and the abolition of the priority of placement policy, the legislator is emphasizing the great importance of vocational qualifications and further education in general. The improvement of qualifications increases the chance of a permanent access to the labour market, and subsequently leads to a reduction, or altogether to a termination of the need for assistance in the long term.

More and more regions and industries are complaining that they cannot fill vacancies with suitable skilled workers. Many companies fear that they will have to limit their supply at a future date, or even reject orders. Essentially, three developments are responsible for this. On the one hand, demographics, since our society is getting older and the number of employees who are retiring is greater than that of succeeding younger generations (3). Digitization also dominates the labor market and is changing not only jobs, but entire industries. The Federal Government's Skilled Workers Strategy already makes it easy to see in 2022 that timely and targeted further training can guarantee the procurement of skilled workforce in Germany.

The integration of refugees from the 2015/2016 refugee wave has developed well. Based on the experience of this earlier migration movement, work is to be done more efficiently with the help of job-turbo.

To this end, the Federal Government has shown the typical integration process in a “three-phase model” consisting of “orientation and basic German acquisition”, “work and qualification” and “employment stabilization and extension”.

Phase 1 is primarily about the processes of arrival in the new country, orientation, and early language acquisition, which follows from regular integration course attendance. Skilled workers and experts who can also work without knowledge of German are immediately provided with work placement by the agencies or job centres. Temporary placement in helper jobs can also be useful in individual cases, even if a basic German acquisition is essential for the labour market.

Phase 2 is about finding entry into the training and labour market. In this context, part-time funding opportunities can be used while working if such need is identified. The process leading up to sustainable integration is recorded in the cooperation agreements with the job centers, which should be regularly updated and traceable (4). Agreements made in connection with integration process are declared binding and in the event of breaches of duty, the benefit reduction system stipulated in the Second Code applies.

Finally, in phase 3, employment should be stabilized and, if necessary, further expanded. Building on initial experience with the German labour market, refugees may further their professional training if necessary and thus stabilize their employment. Funding instruments, such as employer benefits and support for employees or the unemployed can be used.

Conclusions/Future Prospects

Cross-country comparisons, show that investment in language is worthwhile and the integration achievements that result from it are more sustainable. Direct employment without language skills has been scientifically proven to have negative effects on the sustainability of employment relationships. In this respect, the Danish integration strategy has been examined in more detail, and has proved the above-mentioned result (5).

The example of other countries and the findings from the previous refugee movement in 2015/2016 have been taken into account and included in job-turbo.

In a joint statement from January 2024, the Krefeld Employment Agency, the Krefeld and Viersen District Job Centers, the German Federation of Trade Unions, IG-Metall, and other agencies confirmed their willingness to actively support the job-turbo programme, launched by the federal government to integrate refugees into the labor market. Franz-Josef Schmitz, managing director of the Viersen district job center, places particular emphasis on placement activities such as: speed dating, applicant days or job exchanges (6). The Federal Employment Agency is organizing Job-Turbo Action Days for the second time in May 2024. Here, applicants are offered the opportunity to get to know digitally the different career chances, internship, and qualification opportunities offered by companies (7).

The success of the job-turbo can only be guaranteed through the joint commitment of all participants. Nevertheless, childcare provision and the lengthy recognition process will continue to pose a problem for refugees. As part of the job-turbo, Federal Minister Hubertus Heil announced that around 400,000 refugees, of which 200,000 from Ukraine, would be offered jobs straight after the completion of their language courses (8). A detailed assessment will be made in the autumn.

Notes

- ¹ **Federal Employment Agency**, Get your job faster with Turbo. 2024, <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/vor-ort/montabaur/presse/2024-4-mit-turbo-schneller-in-den-job> (accessed May 10, 2024)
- ² **Statista** – Professions with the greatest shortage of skilled workers in Germany in 2022, <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1326564/umfrage/berufe-mit-den-groessten-fachkraefteluecken/> (accessed May 10, 2024)
- ³ **Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs**, Federal Government's Skilled Labor Strategy, 2022 <https://www.bmas.de/DE/Service/Publikationen/Broschueren/fachkraeftestrategie-der-bundesregierung.html> (accessed May 10, 2024)
- ⁴ **IAB Institute for Labor Market and Occupational Research**, The Dovish Turnaround: Germany's Social Benefit Reform and Job Findings, 2024, <https://doku.iab.de/discussionpapers/2024/dp0724.pdf> (accessed May 10, 2024)
- ⁵ **Bertelsmann Foundation**, Future Social Market Economy, labor market integration of refugees in an EU comparison. 2016, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000042982568/studie-kein-land-hat-bisher-erfolg-bei-integration-am-arbeitsmarkt> (accessed May 10, 2024)
- ⁶ **Jobcenter Krefeld**, Labor market integration of refugees. 2024, <https://www.jobcenter-krefeld.de/service-2/job-turbo.html> (accessed May 10, 2024)
- ⁷ **Job-Turbo** – Get Work in Germany campaign days. 2024, <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/k/job-turbo-aktionstage> (accessed May 10, 2024)
- ⁸ **Aachener Zeitung**, Heil: “Job-turbo” for refugees is in full swing. 2024, <https://www.aachener-zeitung.de/wirtschaft/heil-job-turbo-fuer-gefluechtete-laeuft-auf-hochtouren/12091528.html> (accessed May 10, 2024)

About the Author

Sarah Jahjah holds a Master’s Degree in Law (Legal Lawyer Master). She has already gained ten years of professional experience in the area of labour market policy and continues to work at the Federal Employment Agency. She is currently completing a personnel development program for a leadership position in the area of market and integration. As part of her doctoral studies at ULSIT, she is conducting research that should contribute to the improvement of advisory services in job centers.

To contact the Author: sarah.jahjah2@outlook.de