City of Atlanta is uniquely poised as a Welcoming City in a region that is not universally welcoming to people from across the globe. Despite this complex challenge, we continue to build a community that is welcoming to all Atlantans regardless of the language one speaks or the country one comes from.

- Trust between immigrant/refugee communities and law enforcement
- Economic mobility
- Anti-immigrant, anti-refugee statewide laws and practices
- Civic knowledge
- English language acquisition

We strive to build an inclusive, diverse city through targeted outreach that boosts civic knowledge, builds trust, and creates a more culturally competent and diverse municipal government.

- Ensure that City services are available and culturally competent for new arrivals.
- Utilize our 311 and 911 systems to serve the needs of new arrivals.
- Host recruitment events in immigrant and refugee communities to create more diverse public safety departments (Police, Fire, EMS).

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Team Members

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R. James Properties

Michelle Maziar
Atlanta Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs

Paedia Mixon
New American Pathways

Alicia Philipp
Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

Innovative Initiatives

- Expanded Atlanta Police Force Hispanic Liaison Officer to multi-cultural liaison unit that includes officers who speak 11 languages including English, Spanish, Korean, Thai, Haitian-Creole, French, Tagalog, Patwa, Italian, Portuguese, and Lao.
- Increased English language opportunities by integrating financial literacy into existing English language classes.
- Established 22 Citizenship Corners throughout the Metro area with 10 Corners in the City of Atlanta libraries and food markets in immigrant neighborhoods.
- Bringing together the philanthropic community to prioritize immigrant and refugee integration.
Boise
Idaho
Einwohner / Population: 218,281 (7.3% Immigrants)

Challenges

• **Transportation**: Lack of a strong public transportation system

• **Housing**: Inadequate supply of affordable housing and need for additional units

• **Healthcare**: Gaps in access to health insurance for low income people

• **Outreach/Integration**: Need to create more opportunities for the host community to engage with foreign-born newcomers; overcoming negative misconceptions

• **Employment**: The majority of jobs refugees obtain do not pay a living wage

Action Plan

Neighbors United is an initiative to help refugees successfully integrate and thrive in Boise. We are made up of more than 100 community leaders, policy makers, resettled refugees, and more. Neighbors United:

• Knits together local resources and tackles challenges in the areas of transportation, housing, health, education, employment, and social integration

• Encourages its partners to become more active in communicating positive messages about refugees and organizing opportunities to connect across cultures

Team Members

Yasmin Aguilar
Agency for New Americans

Roger Brown
Boise State University

Diana Lachiondo
City of Boise

Jan Reeves
Idaho Office for Refugees

Innovative Initiatives

• Refugee Police Liaison

• Borah/Hillside Bridge Program for youth

• Global Talent Idaho

• Stronger Shines the Light Inside (using public art to educate and combat stigma)

• Boise Refugee Restaurant Week

• International Summer Camp

• Village Van

• Annual Conference on Refugees and community-wide forums

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The Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange is administered by:

Der Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange wird durchgeführt von:
Challenges
• any welcoming volunteer activities
• Many welcoming activities by the city council
• Many welcoming NGO activities
• Changing perspective on migration and refugees in Germany
• Limited city resources
• Bureaucratic obstacles
• Challenges not restricted to one city

Action Plan
• Build Networks (e.g. sports)
• Positive Rolemodel Offensive
• Cultural Orientation Platform
• Mentor Network

First steps to achieve plan:
• Enable local initiatives to connect and collaborate more effectively
• Building a strong integration network with existing organizations within the city society
  ...and...there’s an app for that!

Lessons learned:
• Keep in contact
• Exchange experiences and proceedings (e.g. manuals and tutorials..)
• Work on a common welcoming narrative

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The Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange is administered by:
Der Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange wird durchgeführt von:
Columbus / Dayton / Lucas Co. 
Ohio
Einwohner / Population: 11.5 million (4.1% Immigrants)

Challenges
Ohio has a lower than national average percentage of its foreign-born. Yet, with increasing foreign-born in the state, institutions and communities are challenged to ensure immigrant integration and welcoming attitudes. Additional challenges include:

• Community and political backlash of welcoming refugees.

• Limitations to fully serve undocumented immigrants.

• Strong local commitment to welcoming, but lack extensive state support.

• Underemployment and high proportion of highly-skilled immigrants and refugees.

Action Plan
Since 2014, six local initiatives in Ohio have been collaborating at the state level as members of the Ohio Welcoming Initiatives Network (OWIN). We collaborate to leverage our local work to the state level and our action plan includes:

• Working with state legislature to introduce policy that would address challenges and encourage additional state leadership to be engaged.

• Partnering with the Department of Higher Education to create career pathways for highly skilled immigrants and refugees.

• Addressing cultural and linguistic competency through local and regional work.

• Collaborating with national partners to make the economic case for welcoming and integrating through data reports.

Team Members
Melissa Bertolo
City of Dayton Human Relations Council, Welcome Dayton

Brittany Ford
Board of Lucas County Commissioners, Welcome Toledo-Lucas County

Nadia Kasvin
US Together, refugee resettlement agency

Guadalupe A. Velasquez
City of Columbus, Department of Neighborhoods’ New Americans Initiative

Innovative Initiatives
The local work of the OWIN includes many examples of innovation around civic, economic, linguistic, and social integration of Ohio’s immigrant and refugee communities. A few examples at the local level include:

• Columbus New Americans Initiative has been working on creating immigrant friendly policy and legislation as well as community engagement through welcoming and education efforts.

• US Together promotes refugee social, economic, and civic integration.

• Welcome Dayton hosts the Dayton World Soccer Games, an annual soccer tournament that seeks to unite Dayton’s diverse immigrant and native-born communities.

• Welcome Toledo-Lucas County hosts the Toledo International Film Festival to celebrate cultural diversity and international understanding through curated films, food, and performance with artistic and cultural significance.
Project Umbrella
- Presentation of the things we learned from Welcoming America
- Invitation of mayors and district chief executives
- Showing the projects seen in U.S.
- Planning new projects by networking in the Landkreis

Project Raindrops in Altenberg
- Face-to-face from the grassroots level to the top (city council, local government)
- Together with refugees we will present the exchange experiences to found, such as projects for women and children

Challenges
The *Landkreis Sächsische Schweiz-Osterzgebirge* lies within the state of Saxony, which has witnessed some of Germany’s loudest and most prominent anti-refugee backlash by segments of the local population. The town of Altenberg, for instance, saw an increasingly hostile atmosphere towards refugees in 2015, leading to the establishment of the Initiative *Asyl Altenberg*, which has helped align the mayor and local population behind welcoming new refugees.

Project Raindrops in Pirna
- More publicity for the projects which still exist in Pirna
- Using the main press and social media

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CLAIM & AIM

Based on Mannheim’s eight strategic goals our work focuses on:

- self responsibility at an early stage
- reliable cross sector and multilayer networks
- diversity within institutions and its visibility
- strong and synchronized involvement of volunteers and NGOs
- immediate involvement of lately resettled refugees
- shared responsibility

ACTION PLAN

- self-commitment in attitude and action for living together in diversity
- early labour market orientation and adequate labour market integration
- better public service for migrants/refugees/newcomers
- aids to orientation from day one
- foster involvement of immigrant leaders in decision making processes
- successful integration of migrants/refugees/newcomers in the educational system

WHAT WE BROUGHT HOME

- new perspectives on the possible impact and role volunteers could occupy
- many ideas and good practices for public relations activities
- strong sense for the importance to measure and publish results in valuable data
- serious belief that it is necessary to have a strategic approach for the integration process which brings all the institutions and people involved together

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St. Louis
Missouri
Einwohner / Population: 2.8 Million
(4.7% Immigrants)

Challenges

• Low Immigrant Percentage vs. Other Major US Metros

• Population Decline from 4th Largest US City in 1900 to 42nd in 2015

• Residents Frequently Lack Global Perspective

• Wide Income Disparity Among Native-Born & Foreign-Born

• Battle Among “Have Nots” for Limited Resources

• Long Term Racial Tensions

• Competition Between Urban vs. Rural Priorities at Missouri State Level

• Improvement in Civic Engagement Needed

Action Plan

Bridge divides through:

• Dialog Groups

• Town Hall Meetings

• Food & Festivals

• Exhibits & Presentations

• Cultural-Awareness Training

• Data & Demographic Studies

Team Members

Yemi Akande-Bartsch
FOCUS St. Louis

Betsy Cohen
St. Louis Mosaic Project

Anna Crosslin
International Institute of St. Louis

Frances Levine
Missouri History Museum

Innovative Initiatives

• St. Louis Mosaic: Multi-sector, Public/Private Collaboration

• Leadership engagement at the Highest Levels

• Storytelling

• Focus on Entrepreneurism

• IISTL: Welcome Center for New Americans

• Global Ambassadors & Other Community Engagement

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Herausforderungen

Aktuell sind die wichtigsten Herausforderungen:

• Fehlender und zu teurer Wohnraum in Stuttgart und deshalb zu langer Verbleib der Flüchtlinge in den Unterkünften.

• Langwieriger Einstieg in Ausbildung und Arbeit.

• Erstarkung der populistischen AFD in den letzten Wahlen.

• Komplexität der gesetzlichen Regelungen und Änderungen und deren Vermittlung an die Geflüchteten.

• Grundsätzlich wäre Zeit für die Konsolidierung des Integrationsprozesses wichtig.

Action Plan

Aus dem Entwurf Action Plan haben wir die folgenden Punkte umsetzen können:

• Verbesserung des Informationssystems für Geflüchtete: KOMPASS als neues Leitinstrument.

• Entwicklung einer Stuttgart-Maßnahmenübersicht für den Zugang zu Ausbildung und Arbeit.

• Verbesserung der Kommunikation in der Stadt durch Einrichtung einer webbasierten Plattform (Task Force Integration – in Arbeit).

Teammitglieder

Karin Dressel
Arbeitsgemeinschaft Dritte Welt e.V.

Günter Gerstenberger
Landeshaus Stuttgarter

Stefan Greuling
Evangelische Gesellschaft
Stuttgart e.V.

Angelika Münz
Landeshaus Stuttgarter

Was wir vom Austausch mitnehmen...

• Der Fokus auf eine engmaschige Begleitung und die schnelle Integration in den Arbeitsmarkt und wirtschaftliche Selbstständigkeit der Geflüchteten.

• "Upskilling" als Strategie, um Flüchtlinge aus dem Niedriglohnsektor herauszuführen.

• Die Bedeutung von Wirkungsstudien, um die positive Bedeutung der Zuwanderung nachzuweisen.

• Enge Kooperation mit den ethnischen Communities in der Umsetzung von Integration.
Herausforderungen

Auf Seiten der Gesellschaft:
• Dresden als „gespaltene Stadt“ – Intensivierung eines gesamtstädtischen Dialoges
• Stärkung der gesellschaftlichen Akzeptanz der Aufnahme und Integration von Geflüchteten
• nachhaltige Unterstützung von Ehrenämtern sowie Aufbau hauptamtlicher Strukturen
• stärkere Einbindung von Migrantenorganisationen in den Integrationsprozess

Auf Seiten der Geflüchteten:
• Zurechtfinden in einem neuen Kulturkreis
• Mangelnde Sprachkenntnisse
• Lange Wartezeiten betreffs der Statusanerkennung
• Wohnungs- & Arbeitsplatzsuche

Action Plan

Ziel: „Dresden ist eine lebendige und vielfältige Stadt, in welcher Menschen zusammenhalten und füreinander einstehen.“

• 3 Schwerpunkte: Bildung (schneller Zugang zur Bildung und individuelle Qualifizierung) Arbeitsmarkt (Firmen in Dresden finden passende Arbeitnehmer unter den Geflüchteten) sowie Gesellschaft und Nachbarschaft (Menschen in Dresden sind, unabhängig von ihrer Herkunft, gute Nachbarn)

• Geflüchtete werden
  1. Nachbar*innen
  2. Kolleg*innen
  3. Freund*innen

Unser Fazit:


Wir nehmen mit:
• Viele neue Kontakte und Partner im In- und Ausland
• Neue Herangehensweisen und Ideen
• Viel Motivation und frische Energie, uns den Herausforderungen zu stellen

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