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From arrival to joining the labor market **Bosch supports the integration of refugees**

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Almost 1.3 million asylum seekers arrived in Germany between 2015 and the first half of 2017. Integration is a challenge, especially with a view to the German labor market. It can only succeed if politics, business, and society work together. Bosch believes it has a responsibility to play an active role here in cooperation with its associates – in part because Bosch, as an international employer, views fellow human beings from other cultures as an enrichment and, following in the footsteps of its founder, combines entrepreneurial action and social responsibility.

Since late 2015, Bosch has been supporting refugees through a variety of measures that rest on three pillars: associate involvement, activities at the Bosch locations in Germany, and corporate initiatives. The types of support provided are geared toward local needs. Until early 2016, Bosch focused on helping meet the immediate needs of newly arriving refugees, making donations, and supporting local initiatives. For example, unused property and company-owned housing were made available for refugee accommodation. Today, the focus is on the long-term integration of refugees into society and the labor market.

Supporting volunteer work

Many Bosch associates volunteer in projects involving refugees. To support this dedication, the company launched the “Bosch hilft” donation campaign. As part of the campaign, Bosch matched employee donations to the organization [Primavera – Hilfe für Kinder in Not](#) until the end of January 2016. The total of 820,000 euros was subsequently used to support 113 projects that were suggested by Bosch associates and were aimed at both children and adults. Many of them are focused on facilitating the integration of refugees in Germany through additional language courses, shared athletic and leisure activities, and support in dealing with authorities, to name just a few examples. In addition, individual Bosch locations are also supporting local initiatives with non-cash donations.

Preparing people to work in Germany

Planning certainty and a stable social environment are crucial to the integration of refugees in society. Career prospects make an important contribution to both factors. Here, Bosch is leveraging its strengths as a company that provides occupational training and preparing refugees for the labor market in a targeted manner. At around 30 locations in Germany, the company is offering company tours, additional internships, and introductory training programs to prepare participants for occupational training. The focus is on careers such as machine operator and metalworking professions.

The introductory training programs aim to help refugees achieve the same level of educational attainment as their German counterparts. In addition to German language skills, many refugees lack schooling and a clear picture of the possible professions in Germany, which are essential to successfully completing occupational training. Bosch's qualification programs aim to help close this gap. The respective local vocational training departments, which design the programs in close cooperation with local and regional institutions and authorities, are responsible for the measures. Bosch is making a total of 1 million euros in special funding available for these projects in 2016 and 2017. So far, 750 refugees have benefited from the projects. Those looking to start occupational training at Bosch after the program go through the regular selection process. Currently, seven refugees are receiving occupational training at Bosch in Germany. In addition, Bosch is supporting three scholarships for Syrian refugees as part of a program by the German state of Baden-Württemberg.

Dedication in networks

Along with these measures at its own locations, Bosch is working with other companies in regional initiatives that offer refugees information and training programs, including [Ausbildungscampus](#), a project by Bürgerstiftung Stuttgart involving Bosch and 15 other companies and institutions which provides refugees with language courses, career guidance, and support in writing job applications, among other services.

To pool integration activities throughout Germany, Bosch joined forces with 35 other companies in February 2016 to found the [Wir zusammen](#) network. The initiative gives various different integration projects by German businesses a platform. In doing so, it aims to encourage additional companies and organizations to offer support themselves and share their experience.

Help in crisis-stricken regions

Integration in Germany is just the last step of a long escape. Many people still continue to suffer in crisis-stricken regions in the Middle East and Africa. Bosch

therefore also supports organizations that provide emergency relief on the ground. One example of this is the outpatient clinic run by the German surgeon Hassan Naggar, who himself has Syrian roots. He treats up to 500 refugees a day near the Syrian border in Antalya, Turkey – free of charge. Children, pregnant women, and elderly people in particular seek out his services. Thanks to a donation from Bosch, the clinic was able to afford six months' worth of medication.

Additional information:

Primavera Hilfe für Kinder in Not e.V. <http://www.primavera-ev.de/en/>

Robert Bosch Stiftung, Migration and Inclusion: <http://bit.ly/2uX9LXb>

Ausbildungscampus: www.ausbildungscampus.org

Wir zusammen: www.wir-zusammen.de

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees: www.bamf.de

Federal Association of Volunteer Agencies: www.bagfa.de

Handbook for refugee relief: <http://bit.ly/1QsODth>

Nationwide overview of ARD refugee projects in Germany: <http://bit.ly/2tL7wor>

Press photos: #1089345, #1089488, #1089444

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Facilitating associate involvement, using Bosch resources

Examples of projects to support refugee integration

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KinderHelden: Bosch is making it possible for children to get off to a good start in school

Among refugee families, the desire for security and a structured everyday life is immense. Parents want their children to find prospects for the future and make social connections. For children, learning the language quickly is essential to being able to act with self-confidence, make friends, and successfully enter the German education system. In the Stuttgart-based initiative “Ich kann’s”, launched by the non-profit organization [KinderHelden](#), volunteer mentors help children ages 6 to 12 by acting as a learning companion, allowing them to learn the German language faster and develop self-confidence in school and in everyday life. KinderHelden works with Stuttgart schools to find mentors for children in need while providing a secure legal framework and educational support through training and materials. The mentors meet with the children once a week. They help them with homework, visit libraries, and go on short excursions in the metropolitan area.

More than the individual activities, what makes a difference is the role as a “big brother” or “big sister.” Activities such as eating ice cream and going to the playground give the kids a chance to talk about their everyday lives and offer a fun opportunity for them to improve their German skills. They learn how to get around safely and acquire practical skills such as buying a ticket on the bus. Every afternoon spent together expands the horizons of their new living environment. Right now, several associates have taken on responsibility for at least one year for children from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq, as well as from North Africa, Albania, and Kosovo. The initiative was set up in fall 2015 and is one of 113 projects benefiting from donations by the [Bosch associate aid network Primavera](#). The company has matched Bosch associates’ donations. Up to 2019, Primavera will be financing 120 additional tandems between mentors and refugee children.

Flüchtlingskreis Weilimdorf: Bosch associates provide local support

For many refugees, their journey to Germany initially ends in accommodations designed to provide a temporary home until their residency status is clarified and they can take their first steps toward a new life. This time is often characterized by anxiety about the future, language barriers, and day-to-day monotony. Up to 400 refugees live at the Steinröhre shelter in Stuttgart's Weilimdorf neighborhood, where [Flüchtlingskreis Weilimdorf](#) helps them cope with this time in their lives. The volunteer helpers provide support in dealing with authorities and offer athletic activities as well as additional language courses. Bosch associates are also involved in the initiative and organize regular childcare. In the group, children start and end each session with songs intended to familiarize them with the sound of the German language. They also enjoy classic playground games such as blind man's bluff and sack races. The regular service takes some of the burden off parents' shoulders and provides the children with structure and routine in an environment that is constantly changing, with new residents arriving and leaving all the time. Most come from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nigeria. The language barriers are high, not only due to a lack of German skills. Clear structures and firm rules during their time in the organization's care provide stability, while the group activities make it easier to form bonds.

Qualification for the labor market:

additional internships at the Bosch location in Feuerbach

More than 12,000 associates from 77 different nations work at Bosch's long-established location in Stuttgart-Feuerbach. Every year, over 650 young women and men receive training at the occupational training center in Feuerbach – experience, knowledge, and resources that Bosch is committing to qualifying refugees for the German labor market. The goal is to give refugees an opportunity to get to know careers and the structure of the occupational training system and obtain a level of knowledge that will allow them to start occupational training. Stuttgart-Feuerbach is one of 30 Bosch locations in Germany that provided additional internships for this purpose in 2016 and 2017. One-day company tours offer a first look behind the scenes of the German working world. Short, one-week internships in professions such as industrial mechanic, mechatronics engineer, and materials tester help provide career orientation. In addition, Bosch offers introductory training programs spanning a period of several months to provide targeted preparation for occupational training.

In Feuerbach, as at all other locations, Bosch works with local and regional institutions and authorities to adapt the offers to the needs of the community. The occupational training team works closely with [Ausbildungscampus](#), a [Bürgerstiftung Stuttgart](#) initiative that supplements the training provided by

companies by offering language, job application, and computer courses. A mentoring program supports young refugees in successfully beginning occupational training. The company cooperates with the Federal Employment Agency to provide introductory training programs. During the program, participants receive guidance from Bosch associates over a period of several months as well as a look at operating processes and the working culture, including modern machining and welding techniques, for example, in addition to rules such as wearing the appropriate protective clothing. They also find out how occupational training is structured and what specializations are possible. The observations from this time make it easier for job counselors at government authorities to assess an individual's skills and decide whether to recognize previous qualifications. As a result, the introductory training programs enable young women and men to gain a foothold on the German labor market and take a step toward the future.

Additional information:

KinderHelden gGmbH: www.kinderhelden.info

Primavera – Hilfe für Kinder in Not e.V.: www.primavera-ev.de/en/

Flüchtlingskreis Weilimdorf: www.fluechtlingskreis-weilimdorf.org

Ausbildungscampus: www.ausbildungscampus.org

Bürgerstiftung Stuttgart: www.buergerstiftung-stuttgart.de

Press photos: #1089362, #1089374, #1089395, #1089477, #1089478, #1089489, #1089437, #1089426

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Support for refugees at Bosch

Five questions for Siegfried Czock, Head of Occupational and Professional Training Policies, Robert Bosch GmbH

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Why is Bosch involved in integrating refugees?

Czock: The integration of refugees is a challenge for the entire nation. It can only succeed if politics, business, and society work together. Here at Bosch, we want to face up to our responsibility and do our part. For integration to be a success, the people who have come to us in recent years need prospects. In addition to promoting our associates' volunteer work and local projects, we are focused on making full use of our possibilities as a company that provides occupational training. Our experience and resources allow us to train refugees, thereby easing their integration into the labor market. Having a skilled job means gaining a foothold and having future prospects – in Germany as well as if they return to their home countries.

What specific steps to qualify and train refugees is Bosch taking?

Czock: At around 30 Bosch locations in Germany, we are offering additional internships with a focus on metalworking as well as opportunities to get to know the company. Short internships make it possible to get a look at a German company and professions such as industrial mechanic or machine operator. Multi-week internships are geared toward career guidance. In introductory training courses spanning a period of several months, Bosch also offers an opportunity for targeted preparation for occupational training. In 2016 and 2017, this program allowed us to reach some 750 refugees. The opportunities and requirements vary depending on the location. We therefore do not have a single nationwide program in Germany. Instead, we support our respective locations individually in working with local and regional institutions and authorities. A total of 1 million euros in special funding has been made available for these activities in 2016 and 2017.

What does Bosch hope to achieve through its measures?

Czock: We are pursuing two objectives with our measures for refugees. First, we want to offer them the opportunity to get to know the way things work at German companies and help them plan their futures. This includes such seemingly banal formalities as working hours and workplace organization, as well as standards such as safety regulations and the structure and duration of occupational training. Second, we want to help qualify refugees for the German labor market and make the successful completion of occupational training a realistic goal. By doing so, we are helping refugees and all businesses in Germany who hope to find new specialists in this group. Refugees who apply for occupational training at Bosch after completing the qualification measures go through the same selection process as all other applicants. Every year, we hire some 1,550 apprentices in Germany. In 2016, seven of them were refugees.

What are the challenges in training and integrating refugees?

Czock: We have had many positive experiences with our measures. Motivation among refugees, for example, is consistently high. Language skills, on the other hand, are a major challenge when it comes to training. That is less of an issue at the company, where associates can also communicate through gestures or may be able to find a colleague who speaks their native language. Instead, a lack of language skills makes it difficult to participate in instruction at vocational schools, where technical terminology plays a pivotal role. Many refugees also come from crisis-stricken regions where, in some cases, no proper schooling was possible for years before they left. You can hardly expect them to have the necessary math, physics, or English skills. We also see that the expectations of German employers and refugees do not always match up. For many refugees, a job as an unskilled worker, which would allow them to earn money quickly and support their families, is more attractive than many years of training to become a specialist for lower pay at first.

How can businesses help master these challenges?

Czock: When we launched our measures to integrate and train refugees, we were able to rely on our experience with Spanish apprentices in Germany. Although there are some major differences here, of course, we knew as a result that successful integration in the German labor market takes many years and good preparation. Being involved in local, regional, and national initiatives, as well as exchange with local institutions, is the key. In our work at over 30 locations, we see that the needs and requirements are very different throughout Germany. To give refugees career prospects, we need more easily accessible opportunities for information and internships. The occupational training campus in Stuttgart, for example, supports refugees with such easily accessible information. We work with other companies there. Integration takes

more than just language courses. It also needs the right environment and practical activities.

Press photos: #454925, #454923, #454924

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