

International Metropolis Conference

SEARCHING FOR IDEALS AND SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

At the beginning there was a German-Canadian partnership agreement. Since then the Metropolis conference has become the biggest network in the area of migration and diversity. The Bavarian IQ-Landesnetzwerk MigraNet participates and takes the chance to learn about successful projects – especially in Canada, where experiences are considered exemplary.

By Anne Güller-Frey

The fact that migration is not a national issue lies within the very nature of the concept. The reasons are varied. Beyond a thirst for adventure and looking for work, motivating factors for migration include escaping war, poverty and discrimination. In order for the fresh start and the integration into a new country to be successful, there needs to be a welcoming culture. New arrivals need to feel at ease, become members of the community, and be accepted by society to enable equal participation.

Germany is regarded as the second favourite country to emigrate to. The annual expert report by the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (SVR) concluded the following: Germany has joined the ranks of progressive countries of immigration. This conclusion was drawn following a comparison between the migration and integration policy of Germany and the policies of selected EU states, as well as classic countries of immigration like Canada and the US. Many say it has clearly caught up politically and conceptually in many areas of migration management, and in encouraging integration – currently in the area of labour market policy. It should be made clear however, that there is definitely a need for subsequent improvement in a number of areas. Nevertheless, the debates about integration and migration should not only be held nationally, but also internationally.

Network IQ on an international exchange

For years Network IQ has engaged not only on a national level but also on an international level. Stimuli from other countries can optimise the local strategy. Since the German-Canadian partnership agreement was signed in 2009, an intensive exchange with Canada has followed as part of the metropolis conference. www.metropolis.net

The national Metropolis conference

Since then, the Bavarian IQ state network MigraNet takes part in the annual metropolis conferences in Canada. Alongside the normal conference programme, institutions are visited on site, in order to learn about successful projects.

INFORMATION

Metropolis is the largest network of scientists, government representatives, and international and public sector organisations in the field of migration and diversity in the world. The aim of the Metropolis conferences is to connect all the important players in the fields of migration, development and integration, and in each case to discuss the most recent developments in research, the current political strategies as well as the wishes and needs of the party concerned on one platform. The international Metropolis project in Canada forms the framework for the single Metropolis conference.

Meeting of the supervision team of the international Metropolis conference 2015 in China (f.l.t.r.: Jürgen Schröder, Bernd Geiss, Anne Güller-Frey, Paulo Teves, Christel Baltes).



“IN ADDITION, MIGRANET TAKES PART IN THE INTERNATIONAL METROPOLIS CONFERENCE WITH WORKSHOPS, IN ORDER TO, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, PRESENT THE WORK OF IQ. EXPERIENCES FROM THE NETWORK CAN BE PRESENTED, TOGETHER WITH PLAYERS OF OTHER COUNTRIES TO AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE.”

Canada as a country of immigration

Canada, through its long history as a country of immigration both in immigration policy and integration policy, has a huge wealth of knowledge at its disposal. Whilst in Germany, and in most European states, integration is seen as an adjustment process in a historically conservative society, the approach of the Canadians is completely different. A different take on the topic of immigration is implied with the slogan “Integration is a nation building process”, which describes a more active role of migrants in integration. Immigrants in Canada are part of a developing society and help to shape it.

Profiting from Canadian experience

We can learn a lot from Canada, which is well versed and experienced in integration issues, not only for our immigration and integration policy, but also for the implementation of projects. Not everything runs smoothly: as far as the Recognition Law is concerned, we have learned from the Canadians, but also from their mistakes. Amongst other things at one of our project visits in Vancouver to the Immigrant Employment Council British Columbia (IEC-BC), the mentoring programme was introduced to us. Since then it has been transferred to Germany, and very successfully implemented in several towns and cities.

How does Canada integrate successfully?

The successful integration measures in Canada include the so-called “bridging programmes”, which try to close any theoretical and practical gaps in the migrants’ knowledge as soon as possible in order to build a bridge into the world of work. One success factor for Canadians is the close involvement of industry and businesses. Experience shows that, particularly for the “bridging measures”, cooperation with employers is absolutely essential. In this part of the world, problem areas are similar to those of Canada: the demand for skilled workers is increasing, but the reservations on the side of the employers continue to exist.

International Metropolis conference

In addition, MigraNet takes part in the international Metropolis conference with workshops, in order to, amongst other things, present the work of IQ. Experiences from the network can be presented, together with players of other countries to an international audience. Previous event locations were Copenhagen, The Hague, Sao Miguel (Azores), Tampere, Milan, Mexico City and Nagoya. MigraNet regularly took part in these conferences, and had the opportunity to develop international contacts.

Network IQ is also represented in the steering group for the International Metropolis. Since 2015 Jürgen Schröder, from the federal ministry of labour and social affairs, and Anne Güler-Frey, from the Bavarian IQ State Network MigraNet, belong to this important body. The steering group is the decision making body for Metropolis. This is where the strategic direction of Metropolis is set. Political decisions are discussed, and the venues for the international conferences are decided upon. The headquarters of the steering group is Canada. Howard Duncan, founder and chairman of Metropolis, convenes a meeting of the body twice a year. On the agenda is a discussion about global developments regarding migration, and determining the work programme.

At the upcoming international Metropolis conference 2018 in Australia, Network IQ will be represented by a delegation once again, and will present its work in several workshops.

The promotion programme IQ at the International Metropolis Conference in Sydney

Once again the IQ Network is represented at the annual international Metropolis Conference, which takes place from the 29th of October until the 02nd of November in Sydney this year. In collaboration with international partners the network offers practical oriented workshops to present their activities in different focal points. This way the network gets an opportunity to learn about other successful international projects while simultaneously present the programme’s own successful work abroad.

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