

Effective Information Media to Support Integration Efforts Experiences from Europe

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Abstract

Migration flows are partially triggered by networks and random pieces of information forwarded on social media. Volunteers and organizations provide information that aims at helping the new arrivals to understand their new environment and to tackle challenges like language, shelter/accommodation, jobs, education and many more. This paper analyzes how various actors use analogue and digital communication and explains the lessons to be learned for governmental and non-governmental institutions working in this sector. A tailored assessment scheme is being developed and used for evaluating online and offline information, teaching material, platforms and applications for asylum seekers, migrants and professional and volunteer helpers in Europe. Their tools and contents are compared to find best practices and complementary material which could potentially be shared with other organizations in Europe. The article draws conclusions and suggests channels and strategies for organizations which want to provide accurate information and a deeper understanding of European societies, education systems and labor markets while avoiding biases, wrong perceptions and disillusionments on both sides, the helpers as well as the refugees/migrants.

Key Words

Information, communication, media, refugees, migrants, learning, labor market, integration

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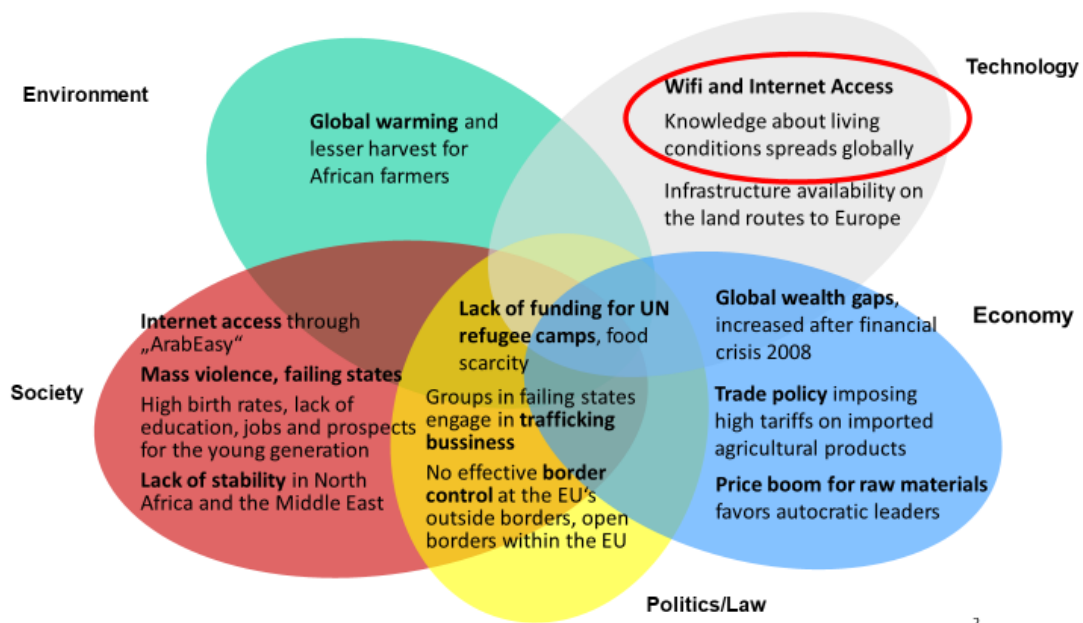
Introduction

Increasing numbers of refugees and migrants from crisis regions and developing countries are seeking asylum and better lives in developed countries. The wish to survive as well as high hopes for a better life let many people underestimate the risks of safe arrival as well as the challenges of settling successfully in Europe. Due to Europe's geographic accessibility and historical and political diversity, it is difficult to establish a formal immigration process with standard requirements for applicants similar to, for example, Canada. Therefore, government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals try to communicate with the new arrivals to facilitate integration. Without a deeper knowledge of their languages and cultures, this turns out to be a difficult endeavor, for the institutions as well as for social workers and volunteers. This paper supports what Gillespie et al. (2018: p. 10) call "... a pressing need for states and international organizations to reconsider ... how they might re-imagine and integrate smartphones applications into strategies and programs for refugee integration, care, protection, and outreach without falling prey to simplistic digital humanitarianism". At the same time, the development shows that attractive digital information platforms will no longer remain a domain of state organizations.

Triggers and influencing factors

The lack of a clearly defined common immigration policy of the EU and most of their member states has made asylum the only way to get into Europe, with the Schengen agreement facilitating the free movement within the EU (European Commission 2013). About 35% of the new arrivals in Europe claimed asylum in Germany (Eurostat 2019). In many cases it is not initially clear whether a new arriving person fulfills the criteria for granting asylum (UNHCR 2020). The reasons for people leaving their homes and seeking hazardous ways to get to Europe are manifold. An overview of the main drivers for migration is shown in figure no. 1 which follows the PESTEL scheme (Pillkahn 2007: p. 87). PESTEL is an acronym for the spheres Politics, Environment, Society, Technology, Economy and Law. Since Politics and Law are interconnected, those two are merged in the visualization. All spheres are arranged as overlapping because several drivers can be attributed to more than one sphere.

Figure 1: **Key influencers** (shown in the PESTEL scheme)



The selection of influencers and their impact analysis are based on research of the European Union, their border management agency Frontex as well as sources like the United Nations (UN 2017), migration researchers Alexander Betts and Paul Collier (Betts and Collier 2017: 32-48), Gillespie et al. (2018) and the Munich Security Conference Endowment (MSCE 2017).

The influencers mutually reinforce each other with **the internet being a multiplier** through its reach-out to people of different regions. In 2016, the majority of asylum applicants in the EU member states and Norway originated from Syria (> 36%), Iraq (< 10%) and Afghanistan (< 15%), followed by Iran, Eritrea and Pakistan (BAMF 2016). With more than 60% (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan) being from Arab origin, their language related internet usage is noteworthy: Arabeasy is also called „Arabizi“ or „Ta3reeb“ and represents a transcription of local dialects in a combination of Latin letters and numbers. It was introduced around 2008 and rose the number of Arab internet users in the Near and Middle East as well as in Northern Africa from 1 million to 60 million (Gonzales-Quijano 2014: 164). The use of the simplified transcription of the Arab alphabet enabled them to join social media communication. This was not only a vehicle of the “Arabellion”, but also helped spreading ideas and impressions of living styles in wealthier regions. As highlighted in the figure, the internet is an influencer which relates to Technology as well as Society. The internet carries information from reliable and

partisan sources and their backgrounds and reliability cannot be easily recognized. Online content of manifold origin has the potential to influence the user's perception and decisions of where to go and what to expect.

The role of the Internet and social media

The internet and social media have a decisive role in two main phases:

1. In the **process of shaping the expectations** of refugees and migrants about Europe and in influencing the decision to flee: Social Media are facilitators for communication across borders, between refugees and their families, friends and helpers, including smugglers and human traffickers (Gillespie et al. 2016: 11,27, 54). Most of the refugees and migrants follow their friends in social media. They might thus be unconsciously caught in "information cocoons" (Sunstein 2007) and have little knowledge about the reality of labor markets and daily life in their destination countries.
2. In the **process of integration**: Online learning can be used as an opportunity to help the new arrivals learn the language, rules and skills they need in their host country.

During phase 1, intermediaries advertised Europe in order to make a business of migration, and took advantage of the lack of knowledge and promised the migrants a golden future with well-paid jobs, houses and cars - which is much more than they could realistically expect with low skills and no experience in the division of labor in digitalized industry processes. The first arrivals' photos, showing them in front of cars and houses (which they didn't own), and with persons like the German chancellor, fueled dreams which can only materialize after learning much more about industrialized job markets, highly complex societal and administrative systems.

For phase 2, literacy and language proficiency are prerequisites for the integration of the migrant diaspora (Collier 2013: 88-90) in industrialized countries with their explicit cultures, where key information is accessible and demanded in a written form. For example, job applicants need an application letter, CV/resume and table of records if they want to be considered, and rentals as well as major purchases need a contract to be signed. This turned out to

be a new experience for new arrivals who came from cultures where jobs were found by talking within a network of relatives and friends. Therefore, speaking, reading and writing skills in the local language are needed in order to be able to integrate in the local society and legal labor market. This is not an easy task for most new arrivals since the EU has 24 official languages (EU 2019) with pronunciations and forms of grammar that are not related to the Arab language and/or their local dialects (Nydell 2014: p. 90). Language learning as well as calculating or programming skills can well be supported by certain types of media which will be discussed in the main part of this paper.

Aims of the research: Improve information effectivity

The aim of this paper is to enable media producers to provide adequate media formats, content and design to facilitate the integration of refugees and migrants, whether in Europe or elsewhere. In order to reach that goal, (1) the knowledge about languages, culture and media usage of refugees needs to be increased and (2) adequate types of media which serve this goal best have to be addressed.

Answering questions no. (1) and (2), aims at closing the research gap on the refugees' or migrants' cultures and media usage, especially regarding the poorer or rural people. The two further goals are conceptual in their nature and relate to the needs of executive powers, asylum coordinators and social workers: They (3) give recommendations for government and non-government institutions to optimize their communication and (4) share best practices and ideas which could potentially be used by more than one institution, community or country and make good solutions available for all, whether they are government and non-government institutions, media, chambers, companies or individuals.

Smart phone usage

The average age of European countries is higher and their social media usage is relatively low in the EU (less than 60% in 2018, according to Eurostat 2020), compared to the young immigrants who made their way from the Near East and Northern Africa to Europe. Refugees for example from Syria or Iraq use smartphones to stay in touch with their families and friends back home. Others coming on plastic boats through the Mediterranean had received cheap

smartphones by their facilitators to connect with the rescue boats and to tell others that they had successfully reached Europe. More advanced technologies for digital routing were available later, when the prices for devices and connectivity had fallen and persons had time to plan their travel along the now available digital impressions of their predecessors (Sánchez-Querubin and Rogers 2018).

Figure 3, based on the PESTEL spheres introduced in figure 1, shows how framework conditions, group memberships and roles influence media usage.

Figure 3: Influencers on the refugees’ media usage and their impact

Influencers for the refugees’ media usage and their impact

Sphere	Home	Degree of impact	Host	Degree of impact	Potential for change/interventions
Technology	Infrastructure (internet access and local media)	0.6 (neg.)	Infrastructure (internet access and local media)	0.9	Media evaluation and recommendations for improvement
Politics/Society	Political System Education System	0.5 (neg.) 0.5 (neg.)	Political System Education System	0.4 0.8 (pos.)	Increase awareness Practical help for teachers
Economy	Poverty, lack of jobs	0.6 (neg.)	Social transfers, internships	0.9 (pos.)	High potential for improvement
Society	Family	0.6	Family	0.4	Relatively low
Society	Friends and human traffickers	0.8 (neg.)	Friends	0.8	Previous networks ? Coaches/mentors as role models

Reisach, U.: Influencers for the refugees’ media usage and their impact. Own representation. 11

To gain a deeper understanding of the impact of those influencers, the roots for the strong increase of asylum claims in the EU are displayed. The impacts are quantified subjectively in the table to show the degree (between 0 and 1) and direction of the respective impact. First, the **technology standard** in their countries, i.e. the availability of fast broad band internet access and local media influences the degree and form of usage. Most of the new arrivals’ home countries offer a lower standard than most European countries. Therefore, information and education media in Europe will play a broader role than they have in their home countries. This indicates a high potential of change, if appropriate channels and content for refugees and migrants in Europe is provided.

In many African and Arab countries, most people have a cheap smart-phone and use social media, but few are able to find non-partisan information on their target countries. Webpage

designers who address refugees and migrants should not only to consider different language but also different perceptions of content. For example, colours, pictures, key words, messages and their tonality might need to be adapted in order to raise the target groups' attention, positive perception and proper understanding (Nitish and Pereira 2005). Since Arab and African cultures frequently build on personal trust (Lewis 2006: pp. 33-34), coaches and mentors in the target countries, preferably of the same age as the new arrivals, are the best role models to demonstrate media usage and create familiarity with the local media devices, channels and programs. Some teachers and mentors who are not "digital natives" themselves might need support in order to increase their own capabilities in giving guidance. Like for all internet users, one of the key learnings is to find good and trustworthy sources and to differentiate between facts and opinions.

In **Politics and Society**, the impact of the political system is lower because most media in Europe see themselves as the "fourth and independent power". But since many new arrivals come from war places and autocratic systems, they think of TV, newspapers and "official" webpages as being partisan to a certain regime and/or entertainment only. Awareness of the role of media and creating trust in official media might therefore still need more time and education efforts. The cost-free education system in several European countries including Germany plays a crucial role in the immigration efforts for the mainly young asylum seekers. Language courses are recommended to enable the immigrants to successfully attend ordinary classes (BAMF 2020). Schools and teachers need practical support through appropriate train-the-trainer-courses and teaching material for the target group of refugees/migrants.

In the **economic sphere**, media can deploy potential if they support the learning of the local language and professional skills and facilitate job search. Through internships/employment and social transfers poverty migrants might be able to reach better conditions than in their previous home countries – if they have appropriate skills, a strong motivation to learn and a chance to obtain a permanent status in their target countries. Due to peace, the education system and more open and public societies the impact of families on the new arrivals media usage will probably decrease. Nevertheless, the importance of friends will not automatically decline. Language proficiency, media training and a better understanding of the European societal system and culture could decrease the dependency on "old friends" and sometimes human traffickers who are blackmailing their former customers.

5. Comparative evaluation of media for the target groups

5.1 Types and origins of media researched

The core of this research is an analysis and structured evaluation of existing media and mediation, whether their publishers are official government-related media or NGOs. The evaluation included language learning media and such with provided information on how to live and find work in Germany. Media were excluded if, according to their origin and/or content, they did not aim at supporting the purpose of integration or if those were purely commercial. The following types of media have been included and the respective methods are given in brackets:

- Webpages and Apps with texts, pictures, videos, games (criteria-based testing and usability analysis)
- Print material like books, brochures, pictures (testing, inquiries, interviews)
- Personalized mediation through presentations, workshops, seminars, integration and language courses (qualitative and quantitative content analysis of interviews).

5.2 Criteria and process of evaluation

The evaluation was conducted according to the following assessment scheme and criteria:

Assessment scheme for the analysis of information media for refugees

Criteria 1-4 in bold letters follow Rohweder et al. 2015, the Sub-Criteria are developed by U. Reisach, based on Reisach and Weilemann, 2015

1. Target group affinity

- Findability and download-times or offline-usability
- Eligibility for the goals and size of the target group; clarity of messages
- Appropriate form of addressing the user
- Easiness and enjoyability for users (Rogers et al 2014: 19-21)
- Pre-conducted surveys/interviews/user tests with the target group
- Intercultural balance (e.g. respectful communication, adaption to different communication styles), diversity and appreciation of the persons shown
- Neutrality regarding gender, age, country of origin, disabilities, ...

2. Content and relevance

- Professionalism, correctness, realism, appropriateness for the situation
- Applicability in Europe/in the target country (content-related)
- User activation or interactivity (to keep it interesting and to enhance the learning effect)

3. Objectivity and trustworthiness

- Editor and institutional/professional background of the editor/author/consultants
- Topicality

- Contact persons
- Absence of commercial interest and/ or advertisement

4. Understandability (in terms of language)

- Variety of language
- Easy language, explanations and examples
- Functionalities and support (Rogers et al 2014: 19-21)
- **Visualization**
- Creativity and originality
- Comprehensiveness/understandability (for users with different cultural backgrounds)
- Potential for identification (for users with different cultural backgrounds)

First, samples of online and offline materials were tested with representatives from the migrants' countries of origin (volunteers from Jordan and Syria) to gain practice and refine the assessment scheme. Then online information for refugees/migrants from different countries and organizations were tested through students from various countries, according to Nielsen's usability criteria (Nielsen 1995 and 2012), preferably together with asylum seekers (which was not possible in all cases). Additional insights were gained through the interviews with social workers and volunteers. This way, the experience of several social workers became a secondary source to our own observations. In total, a comparative evaluation of 100 information resources was conducted in 2017 (Reisach, U. 2017: 49-53 and 238-249). The following table uses the evaluation scheme for information resources shown in section 5.2., applied to the information material available in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish in 2017. Quantified and summarized key findings for different types of media are provided in order to achieve a generalizable overview for international readers.

Table 1: Information media for migrants and refugees - Purpose: Language Learning

(own representation, categorizing the lists of useful information sources in Reisach, U. 2017: 49-53)

Type of media	Recommendation	Target Group	Evaluation Results				+ Positive features - Frequent shortcomings
			Number of positive samples	Thereof +++	Thereof ++	Thereof +	
App	+++	Refugees, migrants (beginners)	4	2	0	2	+ Picture dictionaries with audio + Offline use possible + Easy handling
Web-page	++	Refugees, migrants (beginners)	5	1	3	1	+ Daily life orientation + Kids sections with gamification + Videos, audio podcasts
Web-page	+	Language teachers	3	0	3	0	+ Didactical hints for language courses with refugees from different backgrounds + Basic information for volunteer language teachers + Modular structure + Work sheets provided

Online course	++	Refugees, migrants (beginners)	3	2	0	1	+ Pictograms for visualization - Addressing migrants from Eastern Europe rather than Arab or African cultures
Audio visual media	+++	Refugees, migrants	3	1	0	2	+ Target group orientation - Addressing migrants from Eastern Europe rather than Arab or African cultures
Information leaflet	++	Refugees, migrants	1		1	0	+ Offline use possible - Only useful for people who can read the Arab language
Book	++	Refugees, migrants	7	2	5	0	+ Addressing life and work issues + Brochure with exercises - Addressing migrants from Eastern Europe rather than Arab or African cultures (in concept and visualizations)
All	All	All	23	8	12	6	

Table 2: Information media for migrants and refugees - Purpose: Life and work

(own representation, categorizing the lists of useful information sources in Reisach U., 2017: 238-249)

Type of media	Recommendation	Target Group	Evaluation Results				+ Positive features - Frequent shortcomings
			Number of positive samples	Thereof +++	Thereof ++	Thereof +	
App	+++	Refugees, migrants	4	2	1	1	+ Testimonials + Easy handling + Visualization + Appropriate for offline usage
Web-page	+	Refugees, migrants	7	1	4	2	- Language too formal - Complexity of the content - Broad variety, no clear structure
Web-page	+++	Volunteers, helpers	18	11	6	1	+ Target-group orientation + Exchange of experiences and practical advice
Web-page	+	Job seekers	14	3	8	3	+ Material to find out about job seekers competencies - Aiming at highly qualified experts rather than asylum seekers
Web-page	+++	Employers	7	2	5	0	+ Positive showcases might encourage others - Only positive cases, lack of information on lessons learned (from both sides)
Social Media	+++	Refugees, migrants	1	0	0	0	+ Target-group orientation + Addressing practical issues
Audio visual media	+++	Refugees, migrants	11	6	3	2	+ Speakers from the refugees' countries of origin + Easy identification with their perspective and humor + News from Germany and the countries of origin (objectivity) + For download and offline use - German language skills necessary to find the Arab version
Information leaflet	++	Refugees, migrants	7	2	4	1	+ Sensitive and funny pictures + Offline availability - Too much and too complicated (legal) content

							- Language too sophisticated, sentences too long.
All	All	All	69	28	31	10	

General health care information in English, Arab and other languages

Web-page	+	Health care seekers	6	4	2	0	+ Sensitive illustration + Designed and tested with physicians from the countries of origin of Refugees, migrants - not specifically adapted for the target group of refugees or migrants
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Core results of the evaluation

Government agencies and NGOs in the target countries are running information platforms and campaigns, trying to offer information about admission criteria and life and work in industrialized countries. Organizations often started with a few translations of key information in Arabic, Farsi, Urdu and Pashtu, but they attached this as pdf-files to their normal web-based information in the more than 20 different European languages. This way, a translation was provided, but hardly accessible for users who didn't speak the local languages and thus couldn't find the pdf which was supposed to help them. The same was true for news channels in Arabic and other languages: They were offered by several public media broadcasters, but just for five minutes per day and on their respective webpages. Very often these offerings were not discovered and the smartphones used by refugees didn't allow a download of the respective data volume.

While the stream of new arrivals created new challenges, manifold institutions were in a hurry to produce leaflets, brochures, webpages and apps. The testing and interviews revealed contrasts between communication and information/media usage patterns of refugees/migrants and those who try to inform them. Many sources used by refugees are unknown to the local people (language barriers, own channels/networks) and vice versa. Western channels are often not adapted to the target group's knowledge, trust and common media usage. For example, the potential and influence of social media and personal networks was largely underestimated or not used because of a lack of experience and sometimes also institutional restrictions: Government institutions need to get legal and high-level clearance for a public release, which contradicts the speed and style of social media. To avoid legal shortcomings, too

much and too complex textual information is given. Most information provided is textual. Depending on the individual's experience and education background, people often have difficulties understanding legal or highly sophisticated texts. In order to cover the many dialects and also reach people who are (almost) illiterate, audio and visual communication would be much better. Despite increasing efforts to send appropriate messages, many platforms and apps fail in reaching their intentions and target groups. They lack competencies or funding for production and/or they underestimate the opportunities of audio and video formats.

One of the reasons for those shortcomings is their unconscious projection of the own perceptions to others: In Germany, written communication issued by an official source is usually solid, fact-checked and trustworthy. For relationship-oriented and more implicit cultures like those in the Arab world, word of mouth of a friend weighs more than any public source (Nydell 2014: pp. 19-22). This is underlined by Syrian refugees who, after the experience of war, say that they "only trust their own mother" (Gillespie et al. 2018: p.8).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The main findings

The German Government and federal states, as well as many community institutions and volunteer organizations realized that more accurate communication and information was needed. They started providing information without federal or Europe-wide coordination.

Most of the information was created with good intentions but in a phase of urgency with no time for deep research and testing. The outcome was manifold pieces of information, provided by diverse public and private institutions, each with their own perspective, content, design, resources and motivation. Scientific and professional guidance relating to media usage and culture was often missing which is why this research aims at filling that gap.

Most public institutions and media providers in Europe are not really considering the different media usage of this new target group. The media formats and content provided by official channels in Europe often used webpages in their respective local languages and thus addressed the local audience rather than migrants or new arrivals. The platforms for labor market integration provide job offers and possibilities to upload their curriculum vitae (CV), but contain few hints on how to write a CV and what to expect in office or manufacturing jobs.

Companies try to accustom job candidates through inhouse-training but small and medium sized enterprises would certainly benefit from apps which provide first guidance. Such kind of apps have been conceptualized (e.g. Kull 2017) but need funding and channels to be realized.

Not only Europe, also many other countries' organizations provide information and teaching material online and offline. A part of it is appropriate and accessible for the target group of refugees and migrants. For example, the Canadian immigration criteria are transparent and easy to access via online self-tests of applicants (Schmid 2017: pp. 175-177). In Australia, an 80-page text-brochure of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Immi.gov 2019) provides information which is hard to understand for persons with limited English. In Europe, the Government of the United Kingdom provides comprehensive information which is frequently updated (Government UK 2016, update 2019). The French Ministry of Interior Affairs (Ministre de l'Interieur 2019) also provides the necessary information on its webpage, but does so in legal texts which are not easy to understand. The German Government (Bundesregierung 2019) offers regularly updated information on migration and integration and the efforts of the federal government in English, French and in easy German, no sentence longer than a few words. Most European countries had started to set up pieces of information for the many new arrivals in 2015 and 2016. Their actions were well-intentioned and often resources were scarce with little time to wait for professional studies, coordination and guidelines on how to proceed. Only a few of their efforts can be regarded as suitable for improving the knowledge and understanding of the cultural/societal and economic reality on both sides. The list of recommendations in the next paragraph shows room for improvement.

Recommendations for developers of media with the target group refugees and migrants

A perfect example for a successful information video is the Finnish Immigrations Service's webpage (Infopankki). It shows a video on a man who dresses himself for the winter in Finland. It is self-explaining without words, funny and instructive.

Graph/Screenshot: Infopankki (2020): Video "How to dress in winter"



Resulting from our research, media producers for refugees and migrants might consider the following recommendations, of which especially no. 6-12 might also be useful for other users:

1. Don't expect too much proficiency with internet and smartphone usage, rather explain how tests/videos/programs/apps work and what the user is supposed to do.
2. Provide offline material and avoid heavy download cost and time.
3. Produce video and audio podcasts in different languages (with subtitles).
4. Trust is best created through well-respected speakers from similar origins or with proficient expertise of and relation to the target group as role models.
5. Considering the culture/socialization of most refugees, provide clear messages/directions including rules and orientation on what the persons are supposed to do or not to do.
6. Avoid institutional terminology, rather use spoken language and short sentences.

7. Keep messages short and simple. Use little text and easy level of language (“less is more”).
8. Design for mobile devices and use interactive designs, social media channels and personalized approaches.
9. Make learning joyful with interactive apps and games, providing awards.
10. Avoid complex structures and information overload. Focus on 3-6 key issues. Make sure the most relevant information can be found within three clicks maximum. Invest in usability testing with members of the different target groups.
11. Engage in Search Engine Optimization and use terms which non-sophisticated users might chose in your language and in their mother tongues.
12. Combine and streamline the offers of several institutions rather than having extra webpages and apps for each local authority or federal state.

Recommendation sounds easy, but wasn't well coordinated the from the beginning. Knowledge about good online material was a valuable source and not often shared among service providers and NGOs because of lack of time, lots of initial cost and efforts for platform developments and a strong competition between different private agencies in (paid) refugee aid (Reisach, U. 2017, pp. 27-33).

Lessons Learned? Status quo, outlook and reflection

Several cross-border initiatives show good progress, for example the shared EU Immigration Portal called “InfoMigrants.net” (European Commission 2019) which was launched in a joint effort by France Médias Monde (FMM), Deutsche Welle, ANSA and the Open University in March 2017. It is a helpful multilingual information base for standard pieces of information such as immigrating to and living in Europe, including common norms and laws. Gillespie et al. (2018: p. 9) call it a laudable step toward reducing information precarity, but also see the better digital provision as means for European Member States to support the policy imperative to prevent and control “irregular” migration to Europe.

Global portals like the International Organization for Migration's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) and the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) in Brussels provide

world-wide overviews. Those international respectively European platforms have partially replaced national initiatives and avoid duplications of work and information. Nevertheless, a general overview does not fully provide the information which is necessary for integration in a local context. Therefore, several national initiatives continue their work, such as the “Office Français de l’Immigration et de l’Intégration” (OFII 2020) and the Scottish Migration Information Centre, operated through the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities’ Migration, Population and Diversity (COSLA 2020). The German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF 2020) improved their information webpages in content and style and made them available in six languages.

Some of the recommendations listed above have been considered in newer media outlets. For example, the “Ankommen App” (BAMF 2018) which was developed by the state of Bavaria’s Broadcasting Studios in Germany and jointly launched with Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in 2016 was a huge success right from the start. It has been improved several times and is now one of the leading applications for new arrivals. In 2016, series like “Marhaba – Ankommen in Deutschland” was broadcasted by the private TV station ntv with the fluent Arab speaker Constantin Schreiber. But TV has been replaced by online videos. An approach between entertainment and serious topics was taken by Firas Al-Shater, a Syrian refugee and youtuber (Youtube, Zukar 2020), who is meanwhile hired by organizations such as the Consumer Protection Agency in Germany to explain issues like purchasing food, renting an apartment, signing contracts or energy saving. Tests conducted by Jordanian and German students (Hadrami 2017) prove that videos with native protagonists can be appealing to the prospective watchers by using two languages, humor and a not too formal setting.

Further information for the target group of refugees and migrants is being provided by people who have successfully integrated. One of them is the award-winning “migport.com” platform and app (Migport 2020) of Berat Kjamili, refugee and student of the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, and his team. They developed a world-wide knowledge-sharing platform for refugees and locals which help each other digitally and anonymously with questions and answers in manifold fields, including education, health, financial and bureaucratic barriers.

Sources like the previously presented ones are not included in European and national platforms, but seem to hit the target groups' interests and media usage, are search engine optimized, and shared. Whether those new forms of information are equally or better in their accuracy and suitability for the target groups of refugees, migrants and professional and volunteer helpers in Europe remains open for future research. But their usage indicates a certain usefulness for access to education and professional careers. Maybe their more personal approach adapts well to their needs and cultures, at least they seem to provide proximity and probably fun which is sometimes lacking in the officialdom of governmental information. Therefore, the initial lack of co-ordination between actors and organizations on different national, federal, and community levels has not only been overcome by previous, personal and group-specific information, but also by a broader and more mature type of digital information. This development indicates an increasing competency for self-help and globalized digital integration.

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