Chapter 7. Block 4. Sectoral policies related to the integration

Objective 9. Match migrant skills with economic and job opportunities

Successful integration through participation in the labour market is key at the local level. It facilitates access to housing, and enables independence from social welfare. Also, it often enables better social integration because people can better afford leisure activities, build networks linked to labour and face less discrimination on the basis of unemployment. Consequently the city’s Integration and Diversity Monitor (Stadt Wien, 2014) stresses the aim of creating equal chances for employment for migrants and non-migrants and making use of potentials such as multilingualism, that are to the benefit of the whole society.

Recognition of education and training qualifications is a key mechanism for making foreign-born fit for local labour market demands. However, data from the city of Vienna show a clear gap in employment results of third-countries migrants not educated in Austria and those born abroad, but trained in the country of residence. The first group scoring 11 percentage points lower in the employment rate than the second (Stadt Wien, 2017: 88). This systematic gap in accessing the labour market between third country foreign-born hints at discrimination for migrants without an Austrian education or training certificate, as their education does not differ (OECD questionnaire, 2017). For EU/EAA-counties this does not make a difference, 75% of those not educated in Austria are employed compared to 75% of their peers educated in Austria. Further, third-country nationals, whether educated abroad or not, have the lowest employment rate (56% for those not educated in Austria and 67% for those educated in Austria). Further, the data show that the employment rate for women is significantly less than for men. The difference is particularly large for women who were educated abroad and those coming from third countries but were educated in Austria.

One concern is unemployment rates for so-called “NEETs” (young people who are neither in training nor education nor employment). In 2016, 22 000 of the 15-24 year-olds were NEETs, showing an increase of 14% from 2007 to 2016. A particularly large share, 66% of the NEETs educated in Austria is foreign-born or has at least one migrant parent.

Even though decreasing, migrant women who were not educated in Austria make up the highest share of NEETs with 29% in 2016. Also of note is the share of children of migrant parents educated in Austria increased from 17% to roughly 20%, while the shares for other sub-groups decreased (Stadt Wien, 2017, p. 101).

Lower qualification and less-well-paid jobs for migrants and their children are also reflected in the annual income for households. The household income gap between foreign-borns and native-borns increased continuously during the past ten year for people in Vienna. Income for people without a migration background has risen by up to 25% to EUR 24 000 (net, per annum), while it has risen by 4%, so below the inflation rate, to an average of EUR 16 200 (net, per annum) for households from third countries (Stadt Wien, 2017). Households from the new EU states are located in between with EUR 18 400 (net,
per annum), while EU-14 households have the highest income of EUR 26 500 (net, per annum) (Stadt Wien, 2017).

The issue of de-qualification became a prominent policy matter with the EU accession rounds of 2004 and 2007. Back then, many migrants with high qualifications started to come to Austria and did not find jobs corresponding with their qualifications at least at the beginning of their stay with the reasons being manifold (language barriers, discrimination, labour market mismatches, barriers to recognition of qualifications). This is still a challenge today. According to the latest integration monitoring, only 10-18% of native-born Austrians or persons with parents from EU/EFTA countries educated in Austria, work in a job below their educational qualification, while this is the case for 56% for third-country nationals educated abroad and 46% educated in Austria as well as 45% of migrants from EU/EFTA states (Stadt Wien, 2018, p. 97).

In Austria, labour market issues are not regulated on the local city level but at the federal level, leaving the city with limited margin of manoeuvre in this issue. Nevertheless, the city of Vienna has established WAFF, which partners with AMS, the Counselling Centre for Migrants and other key stakeholders to engage and contribute to labour market integration.

In Vienna, the Counselling Centre for Migrants serves as one of the four Contact Points for the Recognition and Assessment of Qualifications Obtained Abroad (AST) in Austria. In 2013, this initiative was implemented at the federal level by BMASK in order to tackle the ongoing de-qualification of migrants and help them with the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad. These regional contact points provide multi-lingual guidance and counselling related to the recognition of qualifications free of charge. The issue of recognition of qualifications is very complex with individual cases needing individual solutions. Regulations concerning the recognition of qualifications have been established on many different levels (national, federal provinces, professional associations) with AST Vienna being quite successful in manoeuvring the respective legal provisions and the pronounced utilisation of that offer, proving its importance.

The Vienna 2020 Qualification Plan addresses a major challenge of the Vienna labour market, namely the growing demand for a qualified workforce and the declining chances of people with a low level of qualification (see Box 7.1). According to MA 23, about 23% of the economically active population (220 000 persons in the age group between 25 and 65 years) have compulsory education only. Large parts of the low-qualified people are migrants or have a migration background. The 2017 diversity and integration monitor state that numbers for Viennese only completing compulsory education is 7% higher for people with migration background educated in Austria than for people without a migration background. Overall, foreign-born groups educated abroad have lower educational attainment results counting higher percentages of persons without degree and larger low-qualification shares (Stadt Wien, 2017).
Box 7.1. The Vienna 2020 Qualification Plan

The key target group of the Vienna 2020 Qualification Plan are young people who have not had any education beyond compulsory schooling (Grade 9). The measure actively seeks to reduce the share of this group in the total workforce until the year 2020. Multiple stakeholders are engaged in this process: the city of Vienna, AK Vienna, AMS, WAFF, WK Vienna, BMASK, the Vienna group of the Federation of Austrian Industries, the Austrian Trade Union Federation, the Federal Social Welfare Department and the Vienna Board of Education. The measure was launched in 2013 and targets the whole population, though many migrants belong to the group under consideration. There are three major areas of activity: 1) school and vocational training; 2) vocational training for adults; and 3) information and motivation, for which a set of concrete measures has been launched. The implementation of the Vienna 2020 Qualification Plan is constantly evaluated, monitored and updated.

One concrete example of the measures in the Vienna 2020 Qualification Plan is “catching up on graduations” for persons without a finished apprenticeship. It has been implemented in Vienna for both employed and unemployed adults. Unskilled workers with concrete professional experience are admitted to these tests. The measure is implemented in co-operation between WAFF and AMS. Besides that, the Chamber of Labour and the Economic Chamber offer counselling for migrants who want to earn a professional degree.

Source: Reeger and Enenigel, 2016.

A growing number of migrants is trying to access the Vienna labour market via self-employment. The Vienna Business Agency’s service Migrant Enterprises offers counselling and coaching regarding founding a company, financing and concrete funding, in 17 languages and free of charge. The focus is on start-ups and the early stages of the company phase. Migrant Enterprises also acts as the contact point for low-cost office spaces. Self-employment is also a module of the “Start Wien” Coaching programme. Newcomers interested in setting up a business are directly connected with Migrant Enterprises, where they are offered individual counselling. The recent influx of refugees has resulted in adding Arabic and Farsi to the counselling languages.

According to the expert interview, 37% of business owners in Vienna had a migration background in 2012 and it can be assumed that the share is growing, as many recently arrived migrants from the eastern European EU countries engage in one-person companies most of all in the care sector and in construction. Previous studies have shown the sometimes problematic situations of these entrepreneurs such as self-exploitation and weak positions (Reeger and Enenigel, 2016), still many choose this path due to the lack of chances in the labour market. About 40-50% of the consultations at Migrant Enterprises per year result in concrete counselling and coaching, with the rest lacking feasibility.

In addition to the AMS services available (see Chapter 3), the Province of Vienna added other labour market integration measures for welfare recipients with the project Job-chance, as well as Equal and Step2Job. The projects offer participants paid employment and support in other matters – training, counselling and job placement. By the end of the project period, the participants are supposed to find permanent employment
in the primary labour market. The funding for 2012 amounted to approximately EUR 2 150 000 from the city of Vienna, the AMS, and the European Social Fund. In 2015, the city spent EUR 544 million for this measure, which amounts to 4.3% of the city's total budget.¹

A measure designed for a specific migrant group, namely undocumented workers, is UNDOK, a contact point and counselling institution. It was established in 2014 by some professional unions, the Chamber of Labour and various non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The aim is to support workers suffering from exploitation by providing individual counselling for free. Moreover, the contact point supports people without residence and/or employment permits in law enforcement and provides information about the contact point and its services as well as social rights (Koppenberg, 2015; UNDOK, 2015; Reeger and Enengel, 2016). Though EU migrants are not the sole target of UNDOK, a billboard campaign at the beginning of the 2015 harvest season on large roads from Hungary, Slovenia and the Slovak Republic to Austria was carried out. In the respective languages, the posters said “Welcome to Austria. Your minimum wage in harvesting is 6 euros”. The aim of the campaign was not only to inform seasonal workers but also to raise awareness among employers in agriculture. The German version subsequently reads, “Wage dumping is criminal”.²

**Objective 10. Secure access to adequate housing**

The Vienna housing market situation is generally rather tight due to the dynamic population growth of the Vienna urban region. Rents on the private market and prices for owner-occupied flats are increasing and there is a deepening shortage of affordable, decent housing that affects not only migrants, but the whole urban population.

Most migrants settle along the “belt”, a broad road along the former city walls bordering the city centre from northwest and southwest, where the larger working-class districts were located and rents are cheaper. The region east of the Danube is only sparsely inhabited by migrants, even less so the more remote but affluent areas of the western and southern districts. New immigrants on average have 40% less living space per capita than native-borns (24 m² against Vienna average being 40 m²). Also people who migrate late to Vienna and concluded their education in Austria generally pay on average EUR 2/m² more on living space than native-borns (Stadt Wien, 2017). With regard to homeless services provided by the city of Vienna, in 2012 three in four clients were Austrian citizens, 5.7% nationals of other EU member states, and 18.5% were third-country nationals.

Municipal social housing is managed by “Wiener Wohnen”, a housing agency associated with the city of Vienna. Social housing consists of approximately 220 000 municipal flats. This makes up 23.6% of the housing stock. A further 220 000 municipal flats are subsidised and owned by a limited profit housing association. Consequently about 43.4% of total housing stock is socially bound (see Table 7.1).
Table 7.1. Housing statistics for Vienna, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flat</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flats (principal residence)</td>
<td>901 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House ownership</td>
<td>58 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condominium flats</td>
<td>113 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental flats (total)</td>
<td>691 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Municipal flats (owned by the city of Vienna)</td>
<td>213 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Subsidised flats (owned by limited-profit housing associations)</td>
<td>179 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Private rental flats</td>
<td>299 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>406 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Until 2006, foreign citizens could not access social housing services. This policy had the unintended implication that the migrant population is not concentrated in areas where social housing was built but on the private rental market in areas just outside the city centre. The highest concentration of migrants was living in areas where rents were lower, with non-renovated houses. The municipality subsidised the renewal of many houses in neighbourhoods with a high concentration of migrants, which favoured gentrification of some of those areas. Since 2006, access to social housing has been extended to migrants – irrespective of (country of) origin – but upon the requirement that the person has lived for five years in Austria and two years continuously at the same address in Vienna. Furthermore, depending on their income, tenants may receive housing subsidies. These are provided on an individual basis and can be used not only in social housing, but also for private rental flats. Access to social housing, renovation subsidies and migrants’ capacity to pay higher rents contributed to decreasing segregation (OECD questionnaire, 2017).

This rule explains why foreign groups score low (Figure 7.1) in access to subsidised housing offered by housing associations (OECD questionnaire, 2017). Added to that, the majority of migrants have limited access to owner-occupied housing due to financial constraints on the one hand, and reasons related to the temporality of their migration on the other (e.g. mobile EU citizens, students). This leaves the private rental market, which is accessible immediately.

The private rental market is the most common housing option for migrants, as this is the only feasible option, at least at the beginning of the stay. Almost 50% of migrants from Turkey reside in municipality-owned social housing, the highest share across all groups. Owned homes are an option for Austrian born persons (24.4%) and immigrants from EU-15 (23.4%), who are better off in financial terms compared to other EU migrants and third-country nationals.

According to the information provided by the representatives of the city of Vienna (OECD questionnaire, 2017), more than 75% of main residence dwellings in Vienna are rental, which is clearly above the share of the rest of Austria (about 30%), where privately owned housing prevails. The city of Vienna stated no concrete policies, project or initiatives in the field of housing specifically for migrants, except for refugees, which have been described in Chapter 3.
62 | 7. BLOCK 4. SECTORAL POLICIES RELATED TO THE INTEGRATION

Figure 7.1. Type of accommodation by place of birth in Vienna, 2013

Note: Social housing A = Flats owned by the municipality; Social housing B = Subsidised co-operative flats; Other: Company flats, relatives etc.
Source: Author, based on OECD questionnaire filled in by the city of Vienna and Microcensus 2013.

Homelessness is of growing relevance. According to current estimates (FSW), there are about 10 000 homeless persons in Vienna, among them more than 1 200 “rough sleepers”, people sleeping outside and eventually looking for a place in a shelter. NGOs (Zweite Gruft, Vinziport) state higher numbers – up to 3 000 rough sleepers including those in and out of emergency shelters. Rough sleepers are EU migrants not entitled to social benefits coming from central and eastern Europe. They can be discerned into two groups: 1) persons who have worked for some years in Austria, but due to missing or fragmentary insurance and/or registration periods cannot access the welfare system; and 2) persons fleeing from poverty, homelessness and persecution in the countries of origin, and lack prior employment in Vienna. According to the ambulatory division of the Viennese Assistance to the Homeless (Verban Wiener Wohnungslosenhilfe) that provides emergency shelters, soup kitchens and street work, the presence of homeless persons who are non-eligible for benefits according to the Vienna Social Welfare Act has been growing ever since the EU accession round of 2004 (Chwistek, 2013: 1).

Accommodation options for the homeless in Vienna are rather limited. Only in the time period from November to April are they allowed to enter emergency shelters during the night (financed by the FSW). Additionally, two private institutions financed by donations (“Zweite Gruft” run by Caritas and the emergency shelter of the Vinzenzgemeinschaft) offer possibilities for staying overnight, also during the summer period.

Objective 11. Provide social welfare measures that are aligned with migrant inclusion

Generally speaking, the Austrian welfare regime is based on a corporatist model and a stable social partnership between employers, employees and the state. It is based on contributions and eligibility is linked to the previous activity of the individual. Social security covers sickness, invalidity, maternity, unemployment, old age, nursing care and social need. Social insurance is compulsory for both self-employed and gainfully employed persons with insured persons being legally entitled to benefits. Funding comes from income-related insurance contributions (from employees and employers) and state
support (taxes). The principle of solidarity ensures that those with higher incomes – who therefore pay higher social insurance contributions – help to fund benefits for those with lower incomes (Reeger and Enengel, 2016).

The means-tested minimum income (City of Vienna, 2012) scheme (Bedarfsorientierte Mindestsicherung, BMS) is a welfare benefit based on an agreement between the national level and the federal provinces that sets out key aspects to be transposed into laws on the federal-provincial level (Reeger and Enengel, 2016). It traditionally covers the provision of basic material needs. It is a combination of needs-based income (cash benefit), health insurance (e-card), subsidy for housing costs, rent allowance (if the rent is higher than the subsidy), a mobility pass. According to the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs (2014):

*BMS comprises benefits to ensure people’s means of subsistence and housing needs, and to afford protection in case of sickness, pregnancy and childbirth. A flat-rate benefit (= minimum standard), it is designed to ensure coverage for recurring expenses on food, clothing, personal hygiene, household effects, heating and electricity, as well as on personal needs to enable claimants to enjoy appropriate social and cultural participation.*

The **Viennese model of BMS** transformed in September 2010 the needs-based minimum basic income into a measure aimed at bringing as many people of working age as possible into the labour market. Vienna additionally provides active support for job seeking and involves social counselling. Persons without health insurance are granted access to the healthcare system. This measure is accessible to all Austrian citizens or persons with an equal status who permanently live in Vienna and who have an income lower than the minimum standard. EU migrants have a right to claim BMS according to the EU’s non-discrimination rules, however certain conditions apply according to EU directives which primarily require employment status. The amounts of the minimum benefits are set by the city of Vienna. In 2016, single persons/single parents received up to EUR 838, couples EUR 628 per person and for each child EUR 226 (Stadt Wien, n.d.b)

In 2015, Vienna had 180 646 recipients of BMS, 12.9% more than in 2014. The number of Austrian recipients decreased from 69% in 2011 to 57% in 2015, while migrant groups receiving BMS increased. Most recipients come from Turkey, Serbia, Syria, Afghanistan, Poland, Romania, Russia and Bulgaria. Only 10% of the recipients get the full amount of BMS; more than three-quarters receive so-called supplementary benefits, because their income, unemployment benefit or sustenance is too low. In Vienna, BMS is denied if people who are able to work do not actively engage in finding a job.

Health insurance covers all persons in employment and their family members, unemployed persons who receive benefits, retirees, welfare beneficiaries, refugees and asylum seekers are also covered. According to the Federal Ministry of Health and Women’s Affairs, compulsory health insurance covers 99.9% of the population (ICMPD, 2016: 53).

Irregular migrants do not benefit from the welfare system and are not subject to official healthcare. **AMBER-MED** is an NGO offering healthcare for uninsured persons regardless of origin. Being a joint effort of the Diakonie Austria and the Red Cross, AMBER-MED is largely funded by private donations together with the Vienna Health Insurance Fund (FSW) and the Federal Ministry of Health. AMBER-MED operates free and anonymously. For EU migrants from Romania and Bulgaria, there are consultation hours every week in the respective languages (Reeger and Enengel, 2016).
Box 7.2. Healthcare measure focusing on migrants

A rare example for a healthcare measure directly focusing on migrants is the NGO Volkshilfe’s (Peoples’ Aid) who offers MiMi (health with migrants for migrants), an intercultural health programme funded by BMEIA and the Health Insurance Fund. Launched in 2012, well-established migrants are trained as health guides (more than 50 hours of training) to inform other migrants about topics related to healthcare. These health guides subsequently offer information events in migrant communities (Reeger and Enengel, 2016).

For more information, see www.volkshilfe-wien.at.

In co-operation with hospitals (with religious belonging), the NGO Caritas runs a mobile medical office “Louise-Bus” that provides medical support for homeless persons (see Reeger and Enengel, 2016). From Monday to Friday, the Louise-Bus stops at set places in Vienna for several hours, where doctors and volunteer helpers look after patients.

The ESRA Psychosocial Centre offers comprehensive professional help to people who have been traumatised because of persecution, torture, migration, abuse, disasters or other serious events. It provides a variety of services in the fields of medicine, psychiatry, psychotherapy, psychology, care and social work with a view to helping people to deal with the psychological consequences of traumatic events and to provide them with a new perspective. It is funded by the FSW and the national level. Another NGO, HEMAYAT, provides interpreter-mediated psychotherapy, psychological consulting and medical support for survivors of war and torture. Funding comes from FSW, MA 17, BMI and other sources (see www.hemayat.org). ESRA and HEMAYAT offer outreach services in the refugee facilities, including counselling and training for the on-site staff.

Objective 12. Establish education responses to address segregation and provide equitable paths to professional growth

Education is the basis for economic integration and social societal participation. It significantly increases employability and strengthens cultural possibility to become active in democratic society (Stadt Wien, 2014).

While generally educational attainment increases for all, educational gaps in terms of weaker educational performance is a reality in Vienna. Particularly in more recent years Vienna has experienced increased immigration from highly qualified migrants with a university degree. Some 32% of migrants from a third country have studied and 34% of EU27/EFTA states come with a university degree (OECD questionnaire, 2017).

Native-born children with migrant parents who are educated in Austria obtain similar forms of higher education, compared to their native-born peers. Yet, the numbers for those only completing compulsory education are 7% higher for children with migration background educated in Austria. Overall, foreign-born groups educated abroad have lower educational attainment results, counting higher percentages of persons without a degree and larger low-qualification shares (Stadt Wien, 2017).

While the substantial frames for education policies are decided on the federal level, the city itself can still give an impetus and contribute by providing specific activities. Integration is measured based on the conception that all people living in Vienna should
have the same access to education and can - independent of their legal and social status - reach similar competencies (Stadt Wien, 2014). The following approaches demonstrate how the city engages in education.

**Measures for children of, and before, mandatory school age**

In 2009, the national and the federal-provincial governments agreed on the implementation of one year of compulsory attendance in kindergarten for all children registered in Austria (Reeger and Enengel, 2016). The aim is to promote integration and language skills of all children (with and without a migration background). Attendance at public childcare facilities has been free of charge since then, with children staying for at least 16-20 hours per week. Both the national and the federal-provincial level provide funding and the measure has been prolonged for another three years. The federal provinces are responsible for the concrete implementation of this measure of early linguistic assistance. In Vienna, multi-professional and multi-lingual teams have been mobilised in schools and learning materials have been expanded.

Regarding school enrolment, the Vienna Board of Education has recently established transitional classes with the aim of harmonising the education level reached in the country of origin with Austrian standards in order to enable migrant children to continue studies within the Austrian system (OECD questionnaire, 2017). Generally, however, migrant children in compulsory schools are placed in regular classes together with native children and are educated together and not apart. To adjust for special needs of migrant children several accompanying actions have been implemented: the number of teachers in classes has been increased (“team teaching”), language support and intercultural learning was introduced. As a reaction to the recent influx of refugee children, some schools employ teachers who are refugees themselves on an honorary basis in order to support refugee children.

Furthermore, Vienna provides children and young people who need to improve their German language skills with specific courses in the summer and during the school year (OECD questionnaire, 2017). Summer language courses are on offer for children and young people between 7 and 14 years of age who have problems with the German language. The courses focus on migrant children who arrive in Austria during the school year and on children with German as a mother tongue who (nearly) failed their German class at school. The courses also include sports and leisure activities; they take two weeks and can be attended half-day or full-day.

Kindergartens and schools are also the venues for the project “Mum learns German” that offers language courses at a very basic level for female adults. Concretely, the language training specifically targets mothers with children enrolled in kindergarten or school who have few social contacts and a low educational level (Interface Wien, 2015). This measure is funded by MA 17.

Learning support and German language courses for children between 11 and 14 in the project “Sowieso mehr!” (Anyways More!) by Interface are offered for those who need to improve their German language skills or skills in other school subjects during the school year. Courses are held at out-of-school facilities twice a week for two hours and also during the holidays.
**Measures for youth**

As a reaction to the inflow of young asylum seekers as of 2015, the project “Start Wien – Youth College” was launched in July 2016 with 1,000 places for asylum seekers, recognised refugees and other migrants beyond compulsory school age (15–21). Led by the Vienna Public Learning Centres (Wiener Volkshochschulen GmbH, VHS) a consortium of nine organisations (e.g. Caritas, Interface) offer this service in two locations in Vienna. The goal is to help young asylum seekers and refugees get ready to enter secondary school or job training via a modular system. The budget amounts to EUR 6 million per year; half of it comes from EC-ESF, the other half from funding by MA 17, AMS Vienna and the FSW. Again, this project is based on the idea of “integration from Day 1”, as it can be implemented before the status decision.

A second youth college also is targeted at young migrants (not necessarily refugees), who have newly arrived in Austria and who are older than mandatory school age, who need specific support in the form of language courses, creative and social education, and detailed advice about their educational and professional opportunities (OECD questionnaire, 2017). Interface Vienna and the Vienna Public Learning Centres provide young migrants between 15 and 21 years of age with a package of specific educational measures that is also funded by MA 17, ESF, AMS and BMBF (Federal Ministry of Education). The German language and orientation courses help young migrants in meeting the requirements of the Integration Agreement and aim to support them until they have completed language level B1 to be well prepared for further training and education and the working world. Courses of up to 20 hours per week are held at different times in several districts of Vienna.

The Public Employment Service AMS and the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) have jointly (and in co-operation with the Federal Ministry of Economy and Labour) initiated the project b.mobile that targets primarily young recognised refugees who are interested in an apprenticeship. The goal is to match them with enterprises needing apprentices in all federal provinces. In early 2016, when the project was set up, there were 6,500 young refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection registered as unemployed in Austria, with a clear focus on Vienna. On the other hand there was, and still is, an urgent need for apprentices in the western part of Austria. Interested persons can participate in an assessment of competences (in Arabic, English, French and Farsi); the matchmaking with enterprises is the task of the Austrian Economic Chambers. On the level of federal provinces, apprenticeship coaches take care of the refugees in terms of accommodation, but also provide personal and psychological advice, if necessary.

**Adult education**

In contrast to EU migrants, those from third countries have to sign the “Integration Agreement”, which includes the obligation to acquire sufficient German language skills within two years (see Reeger and Enengel, 2016). In order to accomplish this goal, they get financial funding to attend language courses. As EU nationals do not have to sign the Integration Agreement, they also get no public funding from the national level. In Vienna, they get vouchers in case they attend the Start Wien programme. By contrast, third-country nationals, subject to the Integration Agreement, can combine the Start Wien vouchers with vouchers from the national level worth up to EUR 750. The money is only available after the language test has been passed. Vouchers from the city of Vienna are worth EUR 300 for third-country nationals and EUR 150 for EU citizens, and can be used immediately.
In 2012, after many years of promoting German language courses for applicants aspiring to fulfil the Integration Agreement, MA 17 became the official unit in charge of promoting and organising basic education measures for adults in the Federal Province of Vienna and receives federal and EC-ESF funding to accomplish this task (OECD questionnaire, 2017). To be eligible for MA 17 funding, education facilities must be accredited by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education. The accreditation is based on a comprehensive assessment.

The city of Vienna offers adult migrants a large variety of language courses. Training courses are free of charge for third-country nationals and the maximum group size is ten people. Participants receive individual counselling on training and education issues, as well as accompanying social counselling and extensive documentation. The focus of basic education is not only on acquiring German language skills, but also on further basic skills such as reading, writing, mathematics, information technology, citizenship and preparation for the official Austrian language diploma (ÖSD). People with little or no education are the target group to receive a basic education. In addition to basic education courses, MA 17 and the FSW are also in charge of offering other German language courses to different target groups with a focus on their needs. In 2015 and 2016, the focus was primarily on German language courses and preparation courses for the ÖSD exam for refugees (OECD questionnaire, 2017).

Regarding the integration of migrant women with little or no school education into the labour market, the “Women’s college” offers training courses where women can learn German as well as other important basic skills such as mathematics and computer skills. These courses are free of charge and provide babysitting if necessary.

There are many different funding schemes and providers of language courses (Reeger and Enengel, 2016). The city of Vienna had for a long time tried to gather information about “language course players” in order to enhance transparency. Unlike in Germany or Sweden, there is no consistent national system of language training in place. The federal level (BMEIA, Austrian Integration Fund, AMS), provinces and municipalities are all involved, but not consistently, a fact that has been criticised most of all by representatives of federal provinces and among them, Vienna. In Vienna, Start Wien has established a database of all courses and Start Coaching advises migrants which courses fit the individual needs. For asylum seekers, Bildungsdrehscheibe has been implemented for a successful placement into all available courses funded by the city.
Key observations: Block 4

- Despite not being directly responsible for labour market matching, the city has identified crucial aspects concerning labour market and employment integration and identified ways to address this in their margin of manoeuvre. One concern is unemployment rates for so-called “NEETs” - young people who are neither in training nor education nor employment. A particularly large share (29%) of them are women from third countries, while native-born women only make up 5%. While the share of NEETs without migration background as well as those of migrants educated abroad decreased, the number of migrants or children of migrant parents increased during the past three years from 17% to 20%. In order to especially target unemployment of (young) people who have not had any schooling the city and other key stakeholders such as the Trade Union and the Public Employment Service have collaboratively set up the “Vienna Qualification Plan”. The plan aims to close the gap between low qualified people and a labour market that requires well-qualified staff.

- Social housing is only accessible to foreigners who lived in Austria for at least five years and two years at the same address in Vienna. This limits access to the generally large socially bound housing stock of the city (43.4% of all flats) for migrants who are looking for accommodation on the private rental market. Furthermore, depending on their income, tenants may receive housing subsidies. These are provided on an individual basis and can be used not only in social housing, but also for private rental flats.

- Particularly in more recent years Vienna has experienced increased immigration from highly qualified migrants with a university degree. Some 32% of migrants from a third country have studied and 34% of EU27/EFTA states come with a university degree. Overall however, especially migrants or migrant children who were not educated in Austria have lower educational performance than their counterparts receiving Austrian education. While the substantial frameworks for education policies are decided on the federal level, the city itself gives an important impetus to the other government levels and contributes by providing a large variety of specific activities. For example, transitional classes with the aim of harmonising educational levels from abroad with national levels were established, enabling migrant children to continue their education in the Austrian system. Also, summer classes were introduced and courses for parents of migrant children installed to build their understanding of the educational system and provide them with the needed language skills.
Notes

2. Refer to www.augustin.or.at.
3. Welfare benefits are distinguished from insurance benefits as they don’t require prior payment of contributions and are tax-funded. Benefits are distinguished from universal benefits as the beneficiaries have to explicitly prove their financial need.
4. Eligible persons: Austrian citizens, recognised refugees and persons with subsidiary protection status, EU/EEA citizens and Swiss nationals (under certain conditions), third countries nationals with a permanent leave to remain, or a family member or a residence permit, or a residence permit for permanent residence, granted by another EU state. It targets people with no or very low income, to combat poverty and social exclusion and recently to reintegrate the labour market. The beneficiaries (129 000 recipients in 2011 in Vienna) include school children, pensioners and people who have been unfit to work for over a year, people who are fit for work or temporarily absent from the labour market (childcare), households that have no source of income.