

Project Frostschutzengel: Annual Report 2015 – short version

Aim and tasks of the project

The aim of the project “Frostschutzengel” is to increase awareness for the precarious situations of homeless people from Central and Eastern Europe in Berlin, whilst providing counselling services and ultimately working towards preventing impoverishment. The project strives to be a bridge between the regular system and the support of the homeless.

Main tasks

- To establish and clarify which help is needed and which rights are able to be used across individual cases
- To establish communication between target group and existing counselling offers in Berlin
- To support communication between users and workers of low-threshold counselling institutions
- To improve knowledge regarding the requirements of the target group and intervention possibilities
- To spread scientific findings throughout the public

Since April 2015 the project Frostschutzengel is a part of cooperative maintenance with “GEBEWO- Soziale Dienste – Berlin” and “Caritasverband Erzbistum Berlin”.

The follow-up project “Frostschutzengel plus”, healthcare and social counselling for homeless people, started in January 2016. “Frostschutzengel plus” is a cooperation project of GEBEWO - Soziale Dienste – Berlin gGmbH together with Caritasverband Erzbistum Berlin e.V. The project is financially supported by the Fund of European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and the German work and social ministry) and by the own resources of the above mentioned cooperations.

Statistics 2015

- In 2015, 1,470 counselling contacts took place, 45 out of 421 counselling’s changed to case work with persistent counselling contacts
- The 3 largest counselled groups: people from Poland, Bulgaria and Latvia
- Average Age: 30 – 39 years
- Most individuals had previously completed a vocational training
- The majority live in Germany between 1 and 12 months
- Mostly commonly cited reason for entering the country is seeking a workplace

In 2015 regular counselling hours took place in 10 different institutions of low-threshold homeless institutions in Berlin, 3 homeless day cares, 2 meeting points for homeless and impoverished people, 5 night shelters or night-cafes and as a new partner: “Caritas Ambulanz am Bahnhof Zoo” as a medical care center for people without health insurance.

The counselling took place in German, English, Bulgarian, Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, Polish and Russian.

Results

An extension of foreign language and professional competence within the whole low-threshold homeless counselling is needed. Due to language barriers, recurring discrimination experience, complex life situations and difficulties enforcing rights, working with homeless EU - citizens is a challenge for social institutions and social work in general; this coupled with a lack of financial resources engenders a challenge almost impossible to solve. Often, the assistance provided by social workers, does not result in the expected changes in the individuals' lives and people remain in low threshold homeless counseling. Our team increasingly succeeds in breaking individuals out of the vicious circle of homelessness and helps our clients to integrate into the regular system.

It's clear that low-threshold homeless counseling isn't able to solve the social situation of EU citizens; a more comprehensive approach is needed. The concept of so called intercultural opening of social services in the regular system and an extension of further support mechanisms e.g. extension of migration counseling services is needed to successfully allow homeless EU citizens to integrate.

Projekt Frostschutzengel plus

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