



LIBRARIES ■ FOR ■ ALL

Regional report Frankfurt Public Library Service

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The Frankfurt **Public Library Service (Stadtbücherei Frankfurt am Main)**, consists of a Central Library for adults, a Central Library for children and teens, 4 District Libraries, 13 Branch Libraries, a Mobile Library Service with 2 buses and almost 80 professionally managed School Libraries.

1. Prologue to the project “Libraries for all” in Frankfurt Public Libraries

Altogether in the city of Frankfurt am Main there are **people of 180 nations** living together, 30 per cent of the city’s population is not of German origin. Understandably the Frankfurt Public Library Service has therefore for a long time attached particular importance to library work with persons with a migrant background. For many years the libraries has held for example stocks in foreign languages. However seen in an historical context, the most important pre-condition to the project „Libraries for All” was the founding of the International Library in 2002 in the Gallus Branch Library.

In close cooperation with the relevant partner organisations within the catchment area – and particularly with the Institute for Multicultural Affairs (Amt für Multikulturelle Angelegenheiten) and the Adult Education Centre of Frankfurt am Main (Volkshochschule Frankfurt am Main) - the hard-to-reach target groups of non-German speaking immigrants have been introduced to the library and familiarised with the relevant and specific library facilities available there for them, in particular with everything the library offers in the field of German language learning.¹ The services provided by the International Library in Gallus Branch were incorporated into the organisation and planning of the project. (see chapter 6)

¹ See Lotz, Birgit (2007): Die Bibliothek als Lernort für Migrantinnen und Migranten – das PC-Lernstudio zur Alphabetisierung im Rahmen der Internationalen Bibliothek. Vortrag beim 3. Leipziger Kongress für Information und Bildung. URL: <http://www.opus-bayern.de/bib-info/volltexte/2007/361/>; Lotz Birgit, Silke Schumann (2004): Multikulturelle Bibliotheksarbeit. "Die Internationale Bibliothek" in der Stadtteilbibliothek Gallus der Stadtbücherei Frankfurt am Main. In: Handbuch KulturManagement, B 4.15, S. 1–29; Lotz, Birgit, Silke Schumann (2004): Neue Ideen aus Queens für Mainhattan. Von New York nach Frankfurt am Main: Die "Internationale Bibliothek" kommt bei Migranten gut an. In: BuB 56 (2004),1. S. 30 - 35. Lotz, Birgit (2002): Die Internationale Bibliothek – von New York nach Frankfurt. Gütersloh : Bertelsmann Stiftung. Zum Download unter: <http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/cps/rde/xchg/SID-0A000F0A-DC96509A/bst/hs.xsl/14052.htm?schrubrik=>.

2. The project „Libraries for All“ in Frankfurt am Main: Who will participate?

In Frankfurt two branch libraries were chosen to participate in the project: Gallus Branch Library (Stadtteilbibliothek Gallus) is situated in a catchment area where more than 50 % of the local population do not hold a German passport or they have a migratory background and the staff have extensive experience and training in intercultural library work (International Library).

Sindlingen Branch Library (Stadtteilbibliothek Sindlingen) was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, by implementing new intercultural library services as a Local Multicultural Education Center (LMEC) in two branch libraries the stage was set to compare the development and reception of a LMEC under similar conditions but within differing frameworks. Secondly; no structured intercultural services had been offered in this branch library before. The effect of the newly implemented intercultural services could be closely monitored.

3. Setting up the Multicultural Advisory Board

The innovative core of the project is the Multicultural Advisory Board, the members of which are directly involved in the needs assessment and structural organisation of the project. It was decided to have one Advisory Board for both branch libraries, with members directly involved in one or other of the catchment areas of the branch libraries. There were to be three members and one librarian for each branch library.

Once committed to the target group of migrant parents and families, the branch librarians invited local citizens who were involved in this area to participate as members on the Board. Four of the members have personal migratory experience (Turkish, Greek and Moroccan). Apart from the librarians all members contribute their services to the Board on an honorary basis. The Board was initiated in June 2009 and met eight times between June 2009 and September 2010.

4. Needs Assessment

One of the missions of the Frankfurt Public Library Service is to provide a wide variety of relevant up to date materials and services to help community residents obtain information meeting their personal, educational and professional needs. In order to fulfil this mission it is necessary for each individual branch library to continually be aware of and act according to the changing demands

and needs of the residents of each individual catchment area. To this end the branch librarians work continually and in close cooperation with other institutions within the district to create the necessary profile for their library.

The needs assessment generated for the project correlated with the perception of everyday life in the communities and provided an insight into its sources. All the drafts were discussed at considerable length by the members of the Advisory Board, thus ensuring that educational experts and migrants were included in the preparation and analysis of the needs assessment. All comments of members of the board were incorporated. Further sources of information for the needs assessment were provided by statistics and conceptual plans from other town offices, knowledge gained from work with local district educational committees as well as the pilot events of the branch libraries for the project up to May 2009.

Characteristic of the catchment area of both branch libraries is the multicultural structure of the population. Approximately 20 (Sindlingen Branch Library) or, in the case of Gallus Branch Library, 40 percent of the residents do not hold a German passport. One third, or respectively one fifth of these citizens comes from Turkey, the remainder from a variety of nations. The economic and social situation of the families living in both catchment areas is often precarious. Approximately one third of these families receive state aid. As well as schools and day care facilities for children, in both districts help is also provided by a variety of social institutions and associations. These organizations are efficiently networked through working panels such as local district committees (Stadtteilarbeitskreis) and local advisory boards for the prevention of addiction/violence (Präventionsrat). The branch libraries are represented on both panels. Very soon it became clear that in both districts there existed a need to aid and promote the expertise and skills of parents and families.

Three key aspects emerged for the libraries:

- Promotion of language in the mother tongue
- Assistance with learning German and the promotion of the German language
- The promotion of media competency and literacy

5. The work of the Multicultural Advisory Board

With these facts in mind the Multicultural Advisory Board discussed in detail the proposed new services of the „Library for All“ in the Frankfurt branch libraries in Sindlingen and Gallus. The pivotal questions revolved around the following issues:

Conception of the services: In close cooperation with the Board it was decided in which languages literature should be provided in both branch libraries. The Board discussed the educational concept

which should be clarified in the project and gathered ideas, for example, on the question of how parents could be encouraged to transfer the knowledge they gained during the events to other parents.

Reaching the target group: The experience gained with the International Library in Gallus Branch Library had already shown that migrants with a low standard of education could only be encouraged into the library using an unusual approach. The traditional method of publicity with flyers, handouts, newspaper articles is not particularly successful because the target group takes little notice of it. Apart from this it is often simply the fear of the unknown which has to be overcome. All members of the Board agreed that close cooperation with institutions, groups or associations already working with the target group would provide the key to success. This meant that the librarians had to go out, introduce themselves, put forward their suggestions and create a basis of trust with the institutions, groups and associations. In the course of the discussions the Board compiled a list of potential contact persons.

Public relations: As the members of the Board are themselves involved in multicultural work with families or actually belong to the target group, they brought their own manifold institutional and personal contacts into the project work with them (see Chapter 9: opening party in Sindlingen)

From the librarianship point of view the work with the Advisory Board has been the most productive experience within the project „Libraries for All“. As well as providing affirmation for the chosen approach this work resulted in an abundance of suggestions from which the libraries involved will undoubtedly profit well beyond the end of the project.

6. Services in Frankfurt „Library for all“

The services are targeted towards parents and children, stimulate cooperation between families and intentionally include families with and without a migratory background. Essentially families with low educational experience are approached. The duplication and overlapping of services is to be avoided – which means that the libraries do not offer events or services which are already offered by other institutions such as the day-care centers for children, schools and other social and educational establishments in the area. These institutions are seen as partners in whose activities the libraries can participate with their professional expertise. The „Frankfurt Library for All“ features the following modules:



The Multicultural Family Library

- Library stock
 - Parental handbooks in various languages (Turkish, Arabic, German)
 - Picture books and CDs in individual languages (Turkish, Arabic, German)
 - Picture book and CDs in two or more languages (various languages)
- Products: introductions to the library and events
 - Introduction to the library for parents
 - Briefing on everyday use of the media in family life (reading aloud, television, computer games, internet)
 - Multicultural reading promotion for parents and children
- The library offers itself as partner for institutions, groups and associations organizing multicultural events with themes on family and education.

The International Library with its special stock and facilities (see chapter 1)

- Stock and facilities:
 - Multimedia stock for learning the German language (new in Sindlingen)
 - A literacy learning area in Gallus: 6 computers equipped with appropriate software for alphabetisation, learning German and text editing. This area also has a mixed-media stock of picture books, educational games, teaching and learning material, for the promotion of adult literacy.
- Products: introductions to the library and events
 - An interactive introduction to the library focused on active participation, and tailored to the target group of adults with little knowledge of German (new in Sindlingen)
 - Special introductions into the use of the computers and the specific software for courses in literacy and the German language.

Both the introduction to the library and computer software as well as the briefing on the everyday use of media in family life are enriched with visual material and designed to encourage active participation. An important educational instrument and at the same time a playful element is the „magic cube“, an inflatable plastic cube with transparent plastic pockets on each side. These pockets can be filled with pictures or photos which can be produced in each library as required using a digital camera and photo printer.

The material for the promotion of reading is tailored towards two to five year olds and their parents. Normally the event includes an introductory ritual followed by the reading aloud of the

chosen book, a creative or playful action associated with the book and a ritual to conclude the event. In this way, children and parents experience how much fun it can be to read a book aloud – sometimes even in several languages, to talk about it, play and create with the ideas in the book.²

The library for parents is flanked by appropriate events. Exemplary is the series of events, „Genitori Informati – teaching parents“ which took place during the course of the project in close cooperation with an association of migrants: „Coordinamento Donne Italiane di Francoforte e. V.“. During a series of events, mostly planned by the Coordinamento, Italian parents received information on topics such as bilingual education, the German pre-school and school system and the use of the library. To round off the program there was a Christmas story time and a German-Italian afternoon theater which took place in June 2010.

7. Experiences

During the course of the project both branch libraries worked on a local level together with more than 25 institutions or groups. Only in a few instances was there an agreement to organize one or more events together. In fact it was rather the case that the individual libraries offered their services to other institutions or groups, which, for example then booked an introduction to the library or a multicultural story time. In many instances the services of the libraries was repeatedly called upon by individual institutions, so that, during the course of time close partnerships developed - as for example with the Volkshochschule Frankfurt am Main (Adult Education Centre of Frankfurt am Main, the Eltern-Kind-Treff Gallus (parent-children-club in Gallus) of the Kinderschutzbund (Child Protection Agency) and the Internationale Krabbelkreis (international crawling group) in Sindlingen.

The practice of approaching cooperation partners and institutions in order to reach the target group has proved to be successful. The library staff leaves the library to tender their products outside, this giving groups and individuals the opportunity to meet the librarian personally in their own environment before being confronted with the unknown in the library. Under no circumstance does the library pose competition, on the contrary the special library orientated services both enrich and augment the activities of the institution in question. Appointments and content of the events are individually agreed with the contact person. Normally this policy guarantees a minimum of 5 to 15 participants per event.

Within the framework of the project, between October 2008 and the end of June 2010, there have been altogether 89 events including introductions to the library, reading promotion etc. 51 of these events with more than 550 participants took place during the 9 months following the official public presentation of the project in November 2009.

² Details available on the homepage: www.librariesforall.eu.

8. Evaluation

The evaluation examines to which extent the objectives, verbalized in the needs assessment and the EU-application form for the intercultural learning centres in both branch libraries, have been achieved.³ Firstly it was analyzed to which extent the specific services offered to the target group are used as well as the regular library services. To this end the circulation of the stock for the target group was compared with the circulation figures of the complete stock in each library. The following figures are from the first half of 2010: In Gallus Branch Library the turnover for stock in the section for parents and the International Library is approximately the same as that for the whole stock; in Sindlingen it is slightly less. To be precise, it is only the turnover in the stock for German language learning in the Sindlingen branch which is much lower than the overall turnover and this is slowly increasing. This specific area appears to require a longer period of time to get started. On the other hand, in Sindlingen branch library the circulation statistics for multilingual picture books and handbooks for parents increased considerably between the first and second quarter of 2010 (in some areas the rate of increase was well over 100%), a success which can clearly be ascribed to the success of the events taking place within the framework of the project.

In individual sections, such as the multilingual picture books in both libraries and the handbooks for parents in Turkish in Gallus branch library, the volume of turnover is considerably higher than for the overall turnover. The interests of the target group have been well matched.

The evaluation of the events produced a similar result. In both libraries together 21 events have been evaluated. The participants were asked to what extent they considered the event to have been effective. To do this they could place dots on a target. In nearly all cases participants placed their scores within the central core of the target. Only one event, a discussion concerning media consumption in family life, received a mixed echo⁴. At nine events the participants were also asked if they planned to return to the library. The response to this question was extremely positive. As a result it can be noted that the decrease in the fear of the unknown and the help to help oneself (both verbalized as goals in the needs assessment), appear to have been successful in the services offered by the project. The evidence lies in the good circulation statistics of the stock acquired for the project.⁵

³ Evaluation table in appendix (in German)

⁴ In an interview with the team leader it became clear that the participants, who were mixed in a different group to the usual one, had false expectations.

⁵ The number of registrations and items borrowed were counted directly after the events but not evaluated. They were very heterogeneous. It became clear that the results were dependent upon how many participants actually had the necessary papers (passport and registration certificate) with them, rather than their intentions. For practical reasons it was not possible to collect information on the number of participants from the evaluated events who registered at a later date.

Five interviews with supervisors of groups which visited the library illustrate and confirm the results of the evaluation. Nearly all the interview partners observed that more of their participants used the library than was the case beforehand, many of them emphasised particularly the self help aspect. Two of them reported, for example, that following an event in the library mothers had realised how they could specifically help and encourage their children at home by reading aloud together and through joint creative activity.

During the events in the library, according to the interview partners, participants were able to make a personal contribution both through the discussions and exchange of experiences as well as through reading aloud in their mother tongues. This important aspect remains a goal which the libraries involved in the project and their partners will pursue. The Advisory Board has already contributed ideas which, unfortunately, due to lack of time have not yet been realised.

The interview partners described the cooperation with the libraries as extremely positive and considered their own goals and those of the institutions they represented effectively supported. This fact together with the high number of partners cooperating with the libraries demonstrates that the goal of the project was reached to network with other educational institutions on a local level and to support them in their work.

The Advisory Board presented written feedback reports.⁶ The reports available reflect similar appraisal to that of the interview partners concerning the achievement of goals such as help to self help or the inclusion of the expertise of the target group. Over and above this the reports accentuate the fact that the migrants working on the Advisory Board found themselves in a position in which they could bring in their own ideas and become involved in the organisation of events.

The members valued the work on the Board as such: It was both interesting and stimulating; the proposals put forward by the Board were openly accepted by the libraries and put into practice as soon as possible. Members of the Advisory Board found it particularly fruitful to have the opportunity to "look over the rim of the tea cup" and discuss intercultural library matters with people working in many different contexts. In all the feedbacks received to date, Members articulated a desire to continue the work of the Advisory Board, possibly in a slightly different form.

In summary it is possible to say that the goals of the project have been reached at a local level and that the feedback from both the cooperation partners and the target group were extremely positive. Appropriately, the number of visitors to both branch libraries increased in the first half year of 2010 as compared to the first half of 2008; in Gallus by 20 and in Sindlingen by 40

percent⁷. The results of the evaluation provide an excellent foundation on which, even after the end of the project, the pathway of success can be continued and expanded.

9. Publicity and transfer of knowledge

Other libraries and municipalities have been kept informed through the means of reports and project presentations, for example during the German Library congress in Leipzig.⁸ The workshops which took place in both Gallus and Sindlingen Branch Library proved to be among the most important events for the transfer of knowledge. The first workshop „*New Approach: Multicultural Services for Families*“ took place in November 2009, the second one in June 2010 in cooperation with the “Hessische Fachstelle für öffentliche Bibliotheken”, a specialist department serving libraries in small municipalities in Hesse. This provided the opportunity to transfer the knowledge systematically to other municipalities both in the region and further afield.

On Saturday, November 28th 2009 an opening event was scheduled in Sindlingen Branch Library. It began with a press conference, attended also by one of the members of the ABM and resulting in two positive articles in local newspapers. More than 70 people, mainly parents and their children, attended.

During the course of the event the new collections were presented: books in Turkish and Arabic languages for children and parents, multilingual books for children, and books for learners of German. The schedule of events included introductions to the library for parents and organized reading-aloud sessions of two of the newly acquired books for children in German and Turkish. An international buffet and a Turkish Karagöz-Theatre were the other highlights of the afternoon.



Very important for the great success of the afternoon was the cooperation with one of the members of the ABM. She organized the buffet and came with her group of Turkish mothers into the library. Many of them had never been in the library before.

⁶ To date three from six feedback reports are available.

⁷ A breakdown of the visitors according to their nationality is not possible due to the data privacy protection laws in Hesse.

⁸ See Lotz, Birgit, Schumann, Silke (2010): Libraries for All - Ein EU-Projekt unter Beteiligung der Stadtbücherei Frankfurt am Main. URL: <http://www.opus-bayern.de/bib-info/volltexte/2010/842/>; Schumann,

10. Conclusion and future prospects

The project „Libraries for All“ has proved very stimulating for the multicultural work of the branch libraries in Gallus and Sindlingen. In many respects the work within the project has proved to be a good investment in continuity and sustainability on a local level. Frankfurt Public Library is a municipal institution with a regular annual budget for example for stock and personnel. Taking the initial funding received for the project into consideration it is thus to a certain extent possible for the library to guarantee the financing of the future development of the initiated trends.

- Continuity of the service: The services developed in the course of the project will continue to be offered in both libraries; the educational concepts will be maintained.
- Networks: The local contacts made during the course of the project will be cultivated and new ones made. Already events are being planned with local partner organizations beyond the end of the project.
- Transfer of knowledge: Those responsible for the project will continue to share their experiences and knowledge. For example answering inquiries from other professionals and giving lectures. Another transfer of knowledge within Frankfurt Public Library is planned.
- Conceptual development:
 - The suggestions of the Advisory Board which could not be realized during the course of the project will be given top priority in the future. For example the extension of the Intercultural Reading Activity Boxes to include suggestions for events relating to festivities and celebrations within various cultures.
 - Against the background of the Integration and Diversity Concept of the municipality of Frankfurt am Main⁹, which was compiled in 2010 with public participation, it is conceivable that the theoretical results of the project, in the sense of a „Library for all“, could be expanded to include new target groups and more branch libraries in Frankfurt. Within this context the continuity and form of the work of the Advisory Board is being seriously considered.

Silke: Frankfurt am Main punktet mit EU-Projekt. Interkulturelle Familienangebote der Stadtbücherei im Rahmen von „Libraries for All“. In: BuB 62 (2010), Heft 6, S. 445-447.

⁹ Cf: Stadt Frankfurt am Main, Dezernat XI – Integrationsdezernat (2010): Vielfalt bewegt Frankfurt. Integrations- und Diversitätskonzept für Stadt, Politik und Verwaltung. Magistratsvortrag an die Stadtverordnetenversammlung.

http://www.vielfalt-bewegt-frankfurt.de/sites/default/files/Integrationskonzept_Magistrat_06_10.pdf; for the discussion refer to: www.vielfalt-bewegt-Frankfurt.

Evaluation table Übersicht über das Vorgehen bei der Evaluierung

In der Bedarfseinschätzung (Needs-Assessment) wurden für das interkulturelle Lernzentrum (LMEC) in der Stadtbücherei Frankfurt am Main folgende Ziele festgehalten:

1. Abbau von Schwellenängsten der Zielgruppe gegenüber Bibliotheken
2. Unterstützung der Orientierung der Zielgruppe in vielfältiger Hinsicht (am Wohnort, in der Medienvielfalt, in der Vielfalt pädagogischer Zugänge usw.)
3. Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe („Empowerment“) für die Zielgruppe
4. Kontinuität des Angebots
5. Einbeziehung und Wertschätzung des Wissens der Zielgruppe
6. Unterstützung anderer Bildungseinrichtungen im Viertel mit ähnlichen Zielen (Kindergärten, Schulen, Elterncafés etc.)
7. Beitrag zur Schaffung bzw. Verstärkung der Vernetzung der Bildungsinstitutionen, z. B. in der „Elternarbeit“

Außerdem sollte festgestellt werden, ob die Nutzung der zielgruppenspezifischen Angebote gleich gut ist wie die der allgemeinen Angebote (im folgenden Ziffer 8)

Diese Ziele wurden wie folgt evaluiert:

1. Dokumentation der Ankäufe mit der Rechnung
2. Quantitativ durch statistische Daten:
 - Ausleihzahlen (Stadtbücherei insgesamt, StB Gallus und Sindlingen insgesamt, zielgruppenspezifische Angebote in den beiden Bibliotheken)
 - Besuche in den StB Gallus und Sindlingen
 - Zahl der Bibliothekseinführungen und anderer Veranstaltungen sowie deren Teilnehmerzahlen
 - Zahl der Anmeldungen und der Ausleihen direkt nach den Veranstaltungen (evaluiert 1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
3. Evaluation von Bibliothekseinführungen und –veranstaltungen mittels standardisierter Fragemethode. Auf Grund mangelnder Deutsch- und auch z. T. Rechtschreibkenntnisse Verwendung einer Zielscheibe, auf der die TN zu zwei Fragen sich äußern können:
 - A. Wie hat es Ihnen gefallen?
 - B. Würden Sie wiederkommen?

Die Fragen wurden absichtlich so allgemein gehalten, weil sie in dieser Form von den meisten Teilnehmern verstanden wurden und eine breite Erhebung möglich war. Dennoch wurde bei einigen Veranstaltungen nach Rücksprache mit den jeweiligen Kursleiter/innen bzw. Kontaktpersonen auf die Erhebung verzichtet, weil die Breite der Teilnehmer zu wenig Deutsch beherrschte.

(evaluiert 1 und 3 sowie die Frage, ob die Veranstaltung die Bedürfnisse der TN getroffen hat).

4. Qualitative Einzelinterviews mit ausgewählten KursleiterInnen/Kontaktpersonen anhand eines Frageleitfadens, (5 Personen).
Dokumentation: Protokoll der Gespräche (keine Wortprotokolle)
(evaluiert 2, 3, 5, 6, 7)
5. Schriftliche Ausfüllung eines Feedbackbogens durch die Beiratsmitglieder.
(evaluiert 2,3,5,7)

Nr. 4 (Kontinuität) kann nicht mit einer bestimmten Methode gemessen werden, sondern bemisst sich daran, inwieweit die Dienstleistungen im LMEC nachhaltig sind, also über das Projektende hinauswirken. Dies wird z. B. mit der Dokumentation der im Projekt entwickelten didaktischen Konzepte für zielgruppenspezifische Bibliothekseinführungen auf der Projekthomepage etc. erreicht – und natürlich dadurch, dass Projektbibliotheken die entwickelten Veranstaltungstypen weiter anbieten werden.