

## SYMPOSIUM OF THE BEM-VINDO PROJECT

Balances, discussions and an outlook

After 18 months of the bem-vindo project, a symposium (April 26<sup>th</sup>) was organised to present the implementation of the project at schools and to discuss the educational and participation opportunities of refugees.

The bem-vindo project was installed at three schools in Bielefeld and one in Bünde. Each school was



provided with a social worker to support refugee children and their families and to build up a network of cooperation partners both within and outside the school. The aim is to establish holistic and individually coordinated structures for demand-oriented assistance in the long term. The project is

financed by Stiftung Wohlfahrtspflege NRW and carried out by AWO OWL e.V. The establishment of the school-specific educational responsibility communities (“Bildungsverantwortungsgemeinschaften”) is accompanied by the Centre for Prevention and Intervention.

The bem-vindo team, headed by Teresa Pinheiro, presented and reviewed the results and experiences of the implementation to date. The insights of participating actors from practice were able to draw a multifacetedly challenging picture of their working reality. Prof. Dr. Ullrich Bauer, Sandra Schlupp and Baris Ertugrul presented the data and the knowledge gained from the four surveys of the implementation phase and let the results flow into recommendations for future schools with implementation ambitions. The multi-professional cooperation within the schools, the cooperation with network partners and the work with parents of refugee children were of particular relevance. In our view, after 18 months this reflection raises well-founded doubts as to whether the needs currently covered by the four project staff at the schools can be met without a bem-vindo position at the schools.

In addition, the results of the scientific monitoring and the discussions also pointed to challenges that bring the education system into focus in a larger social context and call for reflection with reference to political guidance of the education system. A lecture by migration and education researcher Prof. Dr. Paul Mecheril and a podium discussion provided interesting highlights on racism-critical issues and multidisciplinary work with refugee families.

In the next 18 months bem-vindo will be confronted with the task of carrying out an effectiveness evaluation at schools to measure the extent to which the project will improve children's educational and participation opportunities.

For further information:

Bielefeld University: [https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/\(en\)/zpi/forschung/BemVindo](https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/(en)/zpi/forschung/BemVindo)

AWO OWL: <https://awo-jugendundfamilie-owl.de/jugend-und-gemeinwesenarbeit/projekt-bem-vindo/>