

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

New online hub for refugees in Germany**The information portal handbookgermany.de combines services for refugees and new immigrants**

All new arrivals in Germany need information. While an abundance of information and offers of assistance for refugees has sprung up on the Internet in recent months, these often fail to reach the recipients. To ensure that refugees are provided with all the information they need, an association of journalists called "Neue deutsche Medienmacher" (New German Media Professionals) has developed handbookgermany.de, a central information portal for and involving refugees. Here, a multilingual editorial team that includes exiled journalists consolidates the information that is already available, adapts it for the media used by the target group, and develops it further. "Trustworthiness is crucial, because many refugees prefer to rely on their own community. So in addition to furnishing information, we incorporate personal experiences," said Syrian network activist Monis Bukhari, who is involved in developing the content of handbookgermany.de.

Aydan Özoğuz, Minister of State and Federal Government Commissioner for Migrants, Refugees, and Integration, supports the project: "In developing handbookgermany.de we are creating the first port of call for refugees on topics such as work, education, life and housing in Germany. The handbook is a manual for the first few years, providing qualified information and guidance for everyday situations. Strong media partners such as Deutsche Welle, public authorities, associations, and initiatives all support the project by supplying content."

handbookgermany.de goes to the places where people communicate—social networks. Content is purposefully disseminated through social media channels. In addition, the central information platform has been tailored for smartphone use and also includes low-threshold services: "In our short information videos, topics such as family reunification are not explained in complicated texts or by experts, but rather by a Syrian father who brought his wife and children over to join him," explained Konstantina Vassiliou-Enz from Neue deutsche Medienmacher. Detailed information and useful links are also provided.

Deutsche Telekom and Adobe Systems support handbookgermany.de

handbookgermany.de is the further development of the refugees.telekom.de portal that Deutsche Telekom launched in fall 2015. Initially conceived to help new arrivals, the portal was continuously expanded in the months that followed. "Our goal from the outset was to make refugees.telekom.de successful enough to be able to attract partners that would help to tailor the portal better to the needs of the target group—refugees," said Birgit Klesper, Senior Vice President Group Corporate Responsibility at Deutsche Telekom, adding, "This is why we are delighted that thanks to our collaboration with Adobe and Neue deutsche Medienmacher we are able to migrate our portal to the new, enhanced platform handbookgermany.de." Deutsche Telekom's subsidiary T-Systems Multimedia Solutions from Dresden will continue to provide technical support for handbookgermany.de. The digital government solution of software vendor Adobe Systems is helping to make handbookgermany.de a success: "Our solutions give people easy access to the portal on the devices available to them. At the same time, we identify personal needs and provide concrete support. This is turning technology into a kind of advisor," explained Stefan Ropers, Managing Director Central Europe at Adobe Systems.

handbookgermany.de has been online since February 1 and is being constantly expanded.

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Project sponsor:

Neue deutsche Medienmacher e.V., an organization of media professionals with and without migrant backgrounds who are committed to furthering diversity in the media.

Partners:

Deutsche Telekom

T-Systems Multimedia Solutions GmbH

Adobe Systems Incorporated

In cooperation with:

Integrationhub e.V., a network of initiatives for integrating refugees and new immigrants, such as with "Syrisches Haus," the Syrian Facebook community in Germany

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