

bikup gemeinnützige GmbH



bikup gGmbH (International Society for Education, Culture & Participation) is committed to promoting an unprejudiced and equal togetherness of people living in Germany, irrespective of their cultural, religious, political and social backgrounds. With its various activities, bikup designs and creates solutions to face current societal challenges – also in an international context.

bikup makes a difference – at a social, political & human level

bikup gGmbH is a social enterprise, developing, realizing and implementing innovative projects in the fields of education, social issues, health, security and migration. As a certified educational institute, bikup offers needs-oriented advanced training measures. As a centre of competence, bikup also offers consultancy services for and with intercultural experts.

The activities of **bikup gemeinnützige GmbH** are based on three pillars:

1st pillar – Projects

As a project initiator: bikup develops and tests projects in response to social, medical and societal as well as educational and employment policy challenges. bikup also acts on an operational and political level to reliably embed successful projects into existing regular structures. The project activities not only have a local, regional and federal but also a European and international focus.

2nd pillar – Education & employment

As an educational institution: bikup offers certified training and further training measures with a focus on interculturality. The educational measures are aimed at activating and professionalising people's resources, allowing for their needs-oriented, inclusive and successful integration into the labour market.

3rd pillar – Centre of competence and intercultural expert agency

As a social service provider: bikup offers intercultural and communication trainings, consultancy and intercultural expert agency services in order to tackle challenges in dealing with foreign clients, customers, patients, employees and business associates.

As a **centre of competence, bikup (ZIKO)** provides cross-cultural trainings, amongst others for basic public authority services, municipal facilities, educational institutions and business partners.

As a **placement centre (bikup Sprachmittlerpool NRW)**, bikup provides the services of multilingual, specialised language and integration mediators in order to resolve and prevent communication difficulties.

Certifications

For quality assurance, bikup is regularly examined by independent, accredited certification authorities. Since August 2012, bikup is approved as an educational institution by AZAV (Akkreditierungs- und Zulassungsverordnung Arbeitsförderung) amongst other certification bodies and certified by the international quality management system ISO 9001: 2015.

A project development and implementation example of a new educational offer in Germany

Following the implementation of a successful refugee project aimed at bringing people with uncertain residence status into employment, the training to qualify as a language and cultural mediator was born and tested. Since 2007, bikup has been playing a leading role in advocating for further development and establishing the new profession of the “language and integration mediator”.

In 2009, with the support of a national task force under the direction of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, a curriculum following nation-wide quality standards and criteria for further education was able to be established. bikup has been the first educational institution to offer the language and integration mediator qualification with more than 2.000 teaching units as a further training measure and can therefore consider itself as the most experienced organization in performing these training programs.

The training to qualify as a language and integration mediator currently includes the target groups of immigrants and refugees, who can draw on their multilingualism, migration background and experience as a refugee. The training programme is also attended by Germans and EU-citizens with migration experience who build on their knowledge of foreign languages, their experience abroad or in the field of integration.

Furthermore, in 2009, bikup gGmbH brought to life the first central placement centre of certified language and integration mediators in Germany: *bikup Sprachmittlerpool NRW* (pool of language and integration mediators). The services of around 300 competent and culturally sensitive language and integration mediators from more than 60 municipalities in North Rhine-Westphalia, speaking more than 90 different languages and dialects, are referred to clients in the fields of social, educational, medical and mental health, security and business affairs.

Partners get a chance to speak!

Jörg K. Unkrig, criminal division director and head of division for prevention, victim protection and crime preventive state projects of the Ministry of the Interior of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, on the deployment of certified language and integration mediators within the initiative “Kurve kriegen”.

“Language and integration mediators genuinely add value to our work. Effectively, their deployment saves resources and makes our work and contact with other cultures easier. Ultimately, they prevent misunderstandings and obstacles. Here, I am obviously talking about certified language and integration mediators such as we deploy them. To have the same cultural background is by far not enough to know how to mediate between different cultures.”

Susanne Kremer-Buttkereit, director of the municipal integration centre Cologne, on the cooperation with bikup gGmbH for the project “Sprachmittlerpool für die Stadt Köln”.

“By deploying certified language and integration mediators, high-level conversations can be facilitated despite language barriers, enabling a mutual understanding for the needs of all parties involved.”

Maurice Martsch, lecturer at bikup gGmbH for politics, conflict management and intercultural communication.

“Ultimately, you can deploy language and integration mediators anywhere where different languages and cultures come together. The area with the largest scope for expansion is the field of business and economics. The demand is there. People need to be made aware and this will open a lot of doors. When it comes to posting members of staff of global corporations to different countries across the world, language and integration mediators could replace interpreters. After all, they have additional skills that interpreters don't have.”

The bikup team

bikup gGmbH was founded in 2008 by Varinia Fernanda Morales as sole shareholder and has started its activities in 2009 in Cologne. bikup's team mirrors our changing society and bikup's approach. People from different countries and cultures, with different religious beliefs, representing minorities and the majority society, work together successfully on common goals. Interdisciplinarity and great commitment are characteristics of this strong team.

bikup

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