

EmpowerHer Showcased During EMPL Mission Visit to Quaz, Bochum

Location: Quaz Integration and Language Center, Bochum

Date: May 27, 2025

Event: EMPL Mission to Ruhr, Germany (May 26–28, 2025)

Host: Gewerkstatt gGmbH

On May 27, 2025, the EmpowerHer project was presented to an official delegation of the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) during their fact-finding mission to the Ruhr area. The visit took place at Quaz, Gewerkstatt's integration and training center in Bochum, where EmpowerHer is currently being implemented.

The event highlighted how EmpowerHer is advancing the social and professional inclusion of refugee women through profession-specific language learning, hospitality sector training, and VR-based educational methods.

Delegation Members in Attendance

- Members of the European Parliament (MEPs): Pascal Arimont – EPP (Belgium), Dennis Radtke – EPP (Germany), Birgit Sippel – S&D (Germany), Jana Toom – Renew Europe (Estonia), Özlem Demirel – The Left (Germany)
- Political Advisors: Matthias Stöger – EPP, Tara O'Donnell – Renew Europe, Georgios Karatsioubanis – The Left
- EMPL Committee Secretariat: Astrid Meesters – Administrator, Raffaella Battella – Assistant
- Interpreting & Technical Team: Astrid Knoke-Jeremiah – Team Leader (DE), Hubert Rinner – Interpreter (DE), Helen Ferguson – Interpreter (EN), Martin Terence Hellweg – Interpreter (EN)
- Technician - Alex Küch
- Press Representative: Thilo Kunzemann – EPLO Berlin



Presentations Highlighting EmpowerHer



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- **Peter Lübbert**, General Director of **Gewerkstatt**, welcomed the delegation and presented the organization's inclusive training approach for migrants and refugees.
- **Ofelya Weinblat** introduced the **EmpowerHer project**, outlining:
 - Vocational training in four hospitality professions: kitchen assistant, stock management, housekeeping, and front desk
 - Profession-specific **language training from 0 level to B1**
 - **Trauma-sensitive, gamified, and VR-supported methodologies**
 - A **peer-to-peer learning model** supporting sustainable integration
- **Georg Sonderrmann** from **Jobcenter Bochum** gave a data-driven presentation on **demographic shifts and integration challenges** faced by migrant and refugee women in the Ruhr region.



This visit served as a strong endorsement of EmpowerHer's relevance to **EU inclusion, VET innovation, and gender equality goals**. It also created new connections for future **policy dialogue** and **cross-border cooperation** on refugee integration.

We are honored by the recognition from the EMPL Committee and look forward to continuing our work in collaboration with EU institutions, local stakeholders, and the broader community.