



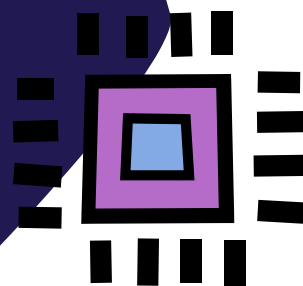
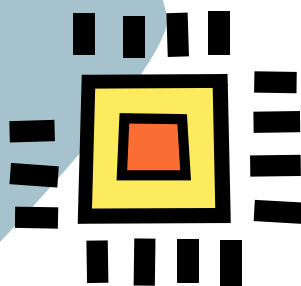
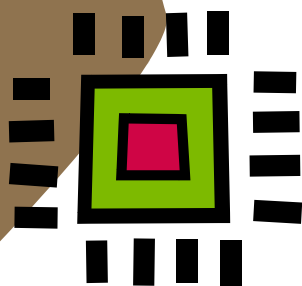
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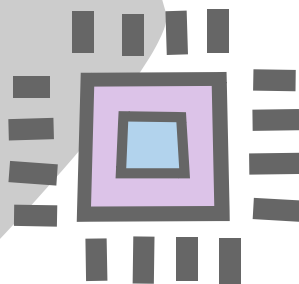
Quo vadis, homo?

The European Union at a crossroads
concerning the vocational integration of refugees
- green paper from grassroots projects



Quo vadis, homo?

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Where are we all going anyway?

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The Chinese saying, "may you live in interesting times!" ostensibly has a favourable and friendly meaning. One thinks, for example, of recent European history in which it has been possible to overcome the disasters of the 1st and 2nd World Wars as well as the Cold War, to create the EU confederation of states based on the peaceful coexistence of its equal members.



Refugees on "their way" © mischa grabner 2016

However, this desire immediately becomes a curse when referring to "interesting" as being associated with destruction, violence, terror, poverty or enslavement. Due to such "interesting" events around 70.8 million people worldwide have found themselves fleeing their homes in the period up to the end of 2018; around 3.6 million of them have been compelled, at least temporarily, to seek peace, security and a safe haven in the EU (UNHCR, 2019). These represent only 5.1% of all refugees worldwide and the European Single Market is considered to be the largest and richest economy in the world (EC/TRADE, 2019) - just to emphasise the overall picture.

So how did the European Community react to this? Well, not particularly as a community: on the one hand, some countries' response has been one of widespread openness, humanity, generosity and a readiness to help; at the same time, we have also seen the responses of other countries that have been overburdened, ignorant and cold-hearted - and above all, countries have started quarrelling about how to respond in the future! The so-called "refugee question" has shown how little real community sometimes exists behind the much-vaunted high-gloss unity of the blue flag with the 12 golden stars. This stress test has also made it clear that existing EU treaties and mechanisms are barely able to even out the various social, political, economic and humanitarian stages of development and national approaches amongst members, in responding swiftly with the implementation of well-managed and efficient joint solutions.

Many EU citizens were completely shocked by the low capability of agreements that for decades have been regarded as the cornerstones of its liberal and humanistic identity - such as the Charter of Human Rights or the Geneva Convention, but also even existing EU treaties. It is no consolation that the resurgence of national egoism, the strengthening of the political right and the increasing erosion or termination of international treaties are not only European phenomena but are gaining momentum worldwide. However, as more and more states - both within the EU and within other international communities - are increasingly insisting on their own rights, while at the same time failing on their commitments to solidarity, humanity may again soon be confronted with situations, whose conquest was the main reason for the establishment of these institutions in the first place.

However, there is also a completely different Europe: one that has been overshadowed by the many recent conflicts and crises, including Brexit; one that is quieter and less headline-catching than the aggressive, Eurosceptic and xenophobic rhetoric that currently exists, but it is one that is by far more powerful and forward-looking! It is a free and peaceful Europe, with openness and warmth, with humanity and solidarity and with creativity and perseverance that copes to overcome difficulties! And a Europe with self-confident citizens who apply European values as principles of daily life, which are inseparable from their cultural, political and social self-perception.

This issue, published as part of the EU project Job to Stay, tells of this other Europe. It is dedicated to those who seek to achieve refugee job integration in a variety of different ways. The first part contains key notes with reports of different experiences, but also recommendations to policy makers at national and EU levels; the second part presents a selection of thematic EU projects supported by the EC - which also can be understood as a clear political statement. Be inspired by the different contributions, contact their authors, expand your networks, initiate new collaboration and business ventures.



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And above all, keep going in developing an open-minded, humanitarian and diverse EU in which everyone can contribute freely and in safety to create interesting times - and let us all jointly protect our Europe from the times becoming too interesting!

Key notes

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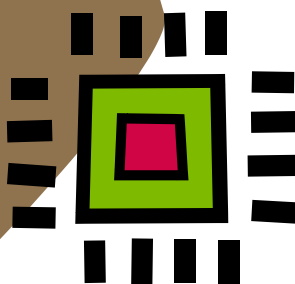


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Uli Fergen

According to an economic survey conducted by DEHOGA (Deutscher Hotel- und Gaststättenverband/German Hotel and Restaurant Association) in autumn 2018, 67.7% of the companies surveyed cited recruitment as their main problem area (DEHOGA, 2018).

With regard to migration flows and asylum application processes, Europe is currently facing a great challenge. In particular, the hotel and catering industries have comparatively low barriers to entry. The possible coordination of both trends (i.e. integration of refugees into the tourism labour market) could be a way of accommodating these trends. It is also crucial to consider potential obstacles to integration: lack of language skills, unresolved legal status, cultural challenges and lack of qualifications. On the other hand, there is also a lack of suitable procedures for validly recording existing qualifications. If no previous qualifications can be identified, no comparison with the assumed work requirements can be made either.

The project Job to Stay was launched on 1st October 2017 with the aim of enabling (mainly female) refugees to be integrated into the tourism labour market through an individual mentoring programme. Female refugees are disadvantaged compared to male refugees because they often have a lower level of education and and/or vocational training and are traditionally more involved in family and child care. There is an increased risk that this particular target group will not be sufficiently integrated into the labour market and society in general.

Since this is a Europe-wide challenge, the following project partners from 5 countries are involved in the consortium under the leadership of the Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM) Schwerin: Association Odyssée (France), E.N.T.E.R. (Austria), EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS (Austria), Formazione Co&So Network (Italy), IHK Projektgesellschaft Ostbrandenburg (Germany), Slovenska Filantropija - Združenje na promocijo prostovoljstva (Slovenia), Univerza na Primorskem - Università del Litorale (Slovenia) and Verbund für Soziale Projekte (Germany).

In order to achieve the objectives specified above, the following project results are decisive:

- (1) Job to Stay Qualification Profiles: description of EQF-based learning outcomes for five selected job profiles. This concerns, in particular, jobs according to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) Level 2 specific to tourism, such as housekeeping, kitchen and restaurant assistance, and landscape planning.
- (2) Development of an instrument for documenting and measuring basic prior learning experiences (Qualification Pass): recording of formal school education and vocational training as well as other (informal / non-formal) learning experiences relevant for the tourism and hospitality sector.
- (3) Guidelines and pilot implementation: guidelines for the mentors of refugees - co-called "buddies" - working in the tourism industry. The mentoring programme will be managed with at least 75% female participants in all Partner Countries. Although the project initially focuses on the (unskilled) assistance level, the strategy of imparting further competences and qualifications to the participants via the mentoring programme is evident, in order to create medium- and long-term impulses for entry into higher-skilled jobs. The central objective remains enabling refugees to enter the Labour market at a lower level in order to start a career that is sustainable and from which all actors can profit (i.e. refugees, tourism industry).
- (4) Development of a Green Paper: this policy paper - which you are just reading! - collects all lessons learnt during the project implementation and provides policy makers at different levels (European, national, regional and local) with recommendations and heuristics on how to achieve sustainable labour market integration of refugees. Additionally, best practice examples of EU projects dealing with labor market integration of refugees get presented and discussed.

Job to Stay - Sustainable integration of low-skilled refugees into the tourism labour market

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The tourism sector is one of the largest sectors in Europe. In 2018, Europe recorded around 713 million tourists, representing a growth rate of 6% in term of international tourists (UNWTO, 2019). In contrast, the tourism sector suffers from a shortage of skilled and unskilled workers.



Valerie Elss



Pia Winkler

Even though the project partners can all look back on a wealth of experience in dealing with refugees, Job to Stay has much potential for innovation - be it the specific focus on female refugees, the Job to Stay Qualification Profiles as a guideline for describing access qualifications, the Qualification Pass as a holistic procedure for collecting and evaluating personal and professional data, knowledge, skills and competences, or the Guidelines as a quality-assured management and coaching model.



Even if the relevant target group, female refugees, is not easily accessible due to cultural, social and organisational as well as religious factors, they are nevertheless extremely open to the holistic project approach.

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Initial impact at the level of political decision-makers and employment agencies has also been identified. The central difficulty in integrating refugees into the labour market is often a lack of information about the applicant's work experience, skills and previous training. Here, the Qualification Pass can remedy the situation.

In addition to the impact on female refugees, far-reaching effects on those involved in the tourism sector in particular are to be expected. The Job to Stay project bridges the gap between labour supply and demand. Among other things, some employers lack the ability to explain and promote which personal, social and professional skills and competences are sought; at the same time, potential employees lack access to information about vacancies and what requirements need to be met. In order to close this communication and information gap, the Job to Stay project has developed a type of "matching system" in which a "buddy" supports the entire application process up to a hopefully long-term employment contract.

In general, the integration of refugees into the tourism labour market represents an opportunity to counter the long-term shortage of skilled workers within the tourism sector, but there are also challenges to be considered. Since migration processes affect both the European labour market and society as a whole, coordinated efforts and activities at the European level are crucial. Close coordination between tourism companies, educational actors and politicians is essential. Strengthening international cooperation appears to be particularly beneficial in terms of developing suitable methods and instruments. For the tourism labour market in particular, it is crucial that refugees are not seen as "cheap labour", but that enterprises create long-term employment prospects (e.g. through training and further education) in order to counter the long-term shortage of skilled labour that exists in many European countries.

Companies already have appropriate instruments at their disposal (e.g. European transparency instruments). Unfortunately, however, they have not yet been sufficiently used, often due to a lack of knowledge. Particularly with regard to the sustainability of labour market integration, it is crucial to make the professional and academic backgrounds of refugees accessible and to record them, even in cases where no formal certificates or testimonials are available. The Job to Stay project uses various methods to ensure the sustainability of labour market integration needs-based intercultural training; consideration of intercultural and gender aspects in the pilots; consideration of ecological models and self-commitment declaration from companies; awareness raising within the most important target groups and stakeholders, including policy makers on all levels. In addition, a contribution will also be made to reducing the shortage of skilled and unskilled workers within the hotel and tourism sectors.



In order to adequately meet the current challenges, such as the shortage of skilled workers within the tourism sector, European research projects are providing the opportunity to develop and implement new sustainable structures.

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Part of my daily routine

The internship is going very well, and I am very happy to have started this training path as I can learn to do something that I love and previously I could never have imagined that this could become my "job". Despite difficulties with the language, I have learned many new words and expressions that will be very useful when preparing or improving my skills with Italian recipes. A whole new world has opened up to me!!

It was not easy for me to organise my life with both all my family commitments and the training. Fortunately, however, the place where I'm carrying out my internship is very understanding and my maitre at the restaurant speaks Arabic with me, and so I feel more comfortable and better able to explain my needs to him.

I don't know if they will offer me a real job here after the internship has ended but I'm very motivated to continue this pathway and learn new things... I do feel that there is still a great deal more to learn!

Why I get involved - testimony of a restaurant manager

Pascal PERY, Head Chef | pascaloupery@gmail.com
L'Escorial (France)

I decided to get involved with the professional integration of people coming from different countries, especially refugees, into the restaurant sector as I am used to welcoming trainees and members of staff from abroad. I decided to share my experience and my knowledge with them and to open up my kitchen once more.

In my work, I have a strong willingness to share and to pass on my experiences to others. I sincerely wish to give opportunities to people who are facing challenges to achieve their aim of integrating into the restaurant sector. During my experience with refugees, the only challenges we have faced are related to communication and language skills. We decided to implement new communicational strategies within our team in order to facilitate integration and to explore innovative ideas of cooperation. In this way, everybody involved is part of the language learning process and all of us are committed to facilitating good communication, and we are all improving our communication and intercultural skills. The duration of professional immersion is important as our restaurant frequently proposes changing menus and the process of integration into the team has several steps. It is an ongoing and rewarding learning process as staff deal with various products and changing recipes.

Welcoming new staff with a migration background has win-win outcomes. I am engaged in sharing and transferring my experiences to other people and I am pleased to support people in need to find a way to move on and to strengthen their professional integration. Our team also has the opportunity to become enriched by meeting newly arrived people, by discovering other ways to cook and different cultures, habits and practices, and by exchanging knowledge and talking about various subjects. It is really energising!

From my manager's point of view, the role of an intermediary specialised organisation is essential as it simplifies the recruitment process and combines successful approaches. Indeed, in my job, I do not have much time to start the recruitment process on the internet or by contacting job agencies. Through an intermediary organisation, new members of staff have the opportunity to be well prepared to enter the company. It allows for adequate and specific preparation to start work as the intermediary organisation has in-depth knowledge and understanding of the labour market and of restaurant processes. It comforts us when selecting new staff members as I would not otherwise make the leap without being contacted by this intermediary organisation.

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My new life as cook assistant in a 4-stars hotel

Manal from Syria (supported by her tutor Simin Shahbazi Far)
Job to Stay integration pilot participant
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FormAzione Co&So Network (Italy)



Ciao!

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My name is Manal, currently working as an assistant chef at the NH Hotel in Florence through a Job to Stay internship. I'm from Syria and have been living in Italy for two years together with my husband and family.



I am definitely fully engaged in continuing to welcome people from various countries in my restaurant and "L'Escorial" will carry on with this cooperation and involvement.

The system approach to the inclusion path for refugees

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Monia Dardi

According to an EU survey (2016), employers see good reasons for hiring asylum seekers and refugees but are uncertain about some practicalities. The most important factors hindering the labour market integration of refugees in EU Member State are: legal and administrative barriers, a lack of institutional support or poor resourcing of available support, economic and labour market challenges, language, qualification and education challenges, social challenges such as discrimination, psychological barriers. The Adecco Foundation for Equal opportunities (Italy) has been placing refugees since 2008. Based upon its experience and upon detailed analysis, it uses a specific methodology for the inclusion path. The system approach involves multiple actors from public and private sectors and multi-level integrated actions.

The two main pillars are:

Vocational career education for beneficiaries in order to empower job searching activities

The underlying ideas behind this approach are: the humanistic idea of man/woman (Rogers, May), life design, biographical approach and resilience framework. The theory of career construction and its life designing counselling model endorses five presuppositions about people and their working lives: contextual possibilities, dynamic processes, non-linear progression, multiple perspectives and personal patterns (Savickas). The life-design framework for counselling interventions aims to increase the client's adaptability, narrativity, activity and intentionality. The model assists individuals to formulate adaptive responses to developmental tasks, vocational traumas and occupational transitions. Resilience is a biological, psycho-emotional, social, cultural and educational process and it allows the resumption of neo-development following a potentially traumatic event or critical situation. Resilience may arise, grow and develop only in the relationships with others because the capacity to adapt and narrate oneself cannot be put in place until significant bonds are created in an environment where the individual can meet, what is called, the tutor of resilience (B. Cyrulnik, 1999).

The model provides a motivational, personal analysis, a work project including life experiences, positive attitudes and work ethics through several sessions of training and orientation, either individually or in groups. The needs analysis is one of the most important aspects in managing the inclusion process for beneficiaries. It is fundamental from the beginning to co-plan the process directly with the "person concerned". The Adecco Foundation sought to combine the classical theoretical framework about career education with the Community Based Approach (UNHCR). CBA motivates people in the community to participate in a process that allows them to express their needs and to decide their own futures with a view to their empowerment. It requires recognition that they are active participants in decision-making.

Outreach session for enterprises about diversity & inclusion

The goal of the Adecco Foundation's diversity and inclusion programme is the creation of an inclusive working environment that recognises diversity as a business value that drives innovation, enhancing a company's economic performance and competitiveness.

Nowadays, diversity management and the inclusion of people with differences is a drive for the corporate social responsibility strategy of most companies. The outreach session about diversity is a tailor-made pathway that integrates theory and practice. The tasks involve: a specific survey with HR and CSR managers and with trade union representatives in order to detect the level of diversity management in the organisation, needs analysis about diversity training and delivery of the diversity pathway (primary and secondary diversity, stereotypes, prejudices in the organisation, corporate social responsibility, good practices and action plan). The diversity session could also be implemented as innovative training with the employees implementing theatre/storytelling/cooking workshops.

These activities are very important for the inclusion process of refugees because they can make corporate management more inclusive and more aware about the value of diversity.

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Mitja Krajncan

Educational challenges in the integration of refugees - pedagogical requirements and conditions for the project Job to Stay

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With regard to the pedagogical requirements and conditions we posed the following questions that we consider to be important when working with the target group (refugees):

- (1) Which methods are best suited to the target group?
- (2) What pedagogical approaches will be used?
- (3) How to plan training that is useful to all participants?
- (4) What aspects should be considered (reflected upon) during the pilot implementation?
- (5) Pedagogical requirements and conditions?

We think that, from a pedagogical point of view, the most suitable methods for working with the target group are in small groups, in pairs, group reflection and evaluation, project work and biographical interviews. Competency-based interviews could also be helpful. As appropriate pedagogical approach we suggest multicultural work. Participants need to feel that they are being understood and respected. Work to build relations, confidence, security, cooperation, learning to communicate, cooperate and build communities with a great variety of people. Each group is a separate entity and we tailor the programme to best suit its individual needs. This creates a working environment in which participants can connect as a group, where differences and conflicts become opportunities, where each individual is important and where communication is the key to understanding.

We therefore plan to implement this form of training as it can be useful to all participants:

Social skills (recognition, trust, cooperation...) training and workshops with special focus on following three levels: the personal level (self-perception, problem solving, expressing ideas); the level of relationships (negotiation and cooperation, building social networks); and the level of broader society (sensitivity to others, contribution to society). These skills are developed individually but show results through relationships. Solution-focused orientation in cases of disagreements, conflicts and other issues we are oriented towards finding solutions. The training should be embedded in multicultural workshops for getting to know each other, maybe with cooking and serving national dishes in "Coffee Corners".

Aspects that should be considered (reflected upon) during the pilot implementation are as follows:

Language limitation: Foreign languages do not allow us to accurately describe ourselves for some very important reasons. Speakers of one language cannot always communicate properly with people who use another language. The participants can expand their horizons by learning different communication skills and approaches whilst interacting with people from around the world.

Cultural and religious factors: Working in an environment with people of different backgrounds, races and nationalities can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience. Working in a multicultural environment requires however a certain level of patience. People from different backgrounds often have different ways of approaching tasks and human interaction.

Prior knowledge of the individuals: Questions concerning the social skills of the individuals. All of the participants come from different cultural, national and family backgrounds. Many are incapable or unable to connect with their »classmates«. Disconnectedness can greatly impact upon the general mood within a group. Various interactive workshops consisting of experiential exercises that give participants a personal experience, and discussions concerning personal views on different topics can support this.

A number of pedagogical requirements and conditions are necessary for effective working. For example, participants must be present and active and must also respect the diversity of other people. Opening up to other cultures is also important, by embracing and appreciating differences and celebrating the leverage gained from similarities.

Multilingualism means communicating and effectively expressing oneself in the language of the host country, in one's native language and in the English language:

Multi + cultural + ity, is the existence of various trends from around the world is a condition for development work in relation to intercultural relations.



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ECVET and migrants - Integration through Qualification (IQ)

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EQF (European Qualifications Framework) and ECVET (European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training) serve as European instruments facilitating transparency, comparability and the recognition of acquired expertise and competencies. To what extent can these closely intertwined instruments of transparency now be applied to migrants from non-European countries?



Hartmut Schäfer



VET in praxis

Also, here the instruments deriving from ECVET offer very good presuppositions, especially as the concept focusses strictly on an outcome orientation, independent of the learning venue (state), learning duration and context.

ECVET contains instruments allowing for the capture of data, its transferability and documentation as well the recognition of acquired learning outcomes. In short, ECVET instruments are fit to validly document learning outcomes regardless of where knowledge, skills and competencies have been acquired. In relation to refugees, we very often deal with participants who report about professional experiences yet who cannot produce any documentation to prove their skills and qualifications. It therefore becomes necessary to validly capture their professional experience (learning outcomes) leading to integration into education and training or employment. As a one match-fit example, the "IQ (Integration through Qualification)" Brandenburg Kompetenzfeststellung (validation of competencies)", can be named. This project addresses people from migrant or refugee backgrounds, who have non-formal qualifications and aims to capture existing skills. Over several days, in a specific competency-measuring-process, acquired competencies, be they formal, non-formal or informal, are systematically captured and documented, individual resources are activated, followed by preparation for the labour market, cumulating in support for planning an aim-oriented professional pathway. The process can be differentiated into the following phases:

- (1) Initial Competence Oriented Consultation (COB); agreement with participants
ECVET: transparency of qualification; units of learning outcomes; learning agreement;
- (2) Validation of learning outcomes through interviews, computer-based tests and, if necessary, in workshops
ECVET: assessment, validation of learning outcomes;
- (3) Confirmation of competencies by the relevant entity
ECVET: recognition of learning outcomes; learner transcript of record;
- (4) Consultation concerning professional prospects, possible qualifications, education and training apprenticeship
ECVET: transfer process;
- (5) Coaching/accompanying during entry into work/education and training/qualification.

For the external assessment in IQ, there are also three different levels of competence: "0" competence does not correspond to the required level - competence is not available or hardly exists (participant cannot carry out the activity); "1" competence corresponds very little to the required level - competence is recognisable, but not very pronounced (participant can only perform the activity with the help of third parties); "2" competence largely corresponds to the required level, competence is available (participant can carry out the activity independently).

During the external assessment, only competences rated as "much or little experience" were assessed. On the certificates, competences levels "1" and "2" were specified. In order to close qualification gaps, levels "0" and "1" formed the basis for additional qualification recommendations. The advantage of this procedure was that even refugees with a low level of German language knowledge were able to participate. During the project period, 593 persons took part in the initial consultation for occupational competence assessment, 210 persons participated in the validation process, 76 found a job after the assessment, of which 59 tested in their trade, 12 found a vocational training place or started a retraining measure.



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The IHK-Projektgesellschaft mbH Ostbrandenburg was awarded with the Global Prize for the Validation of Prior Learning 2019 in the category procedures at the 3rd Biennale (Berlin/DE).

In the formal German vocational education and training system, ECVET credit points, as a numeric value, are of secondary importance; nevertheless, credits are allocated per achieved learning outcome in relation to formal qualifications. The instruments around the validation of competencies for refugees relate principally to ECVET, without officially using the term ECVET. Therefore, ECVET is not necessarily mentioned, although ECVET is applied.



Walerich Berger

Integrating refugees into the Austrian labour market

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From 2012 to 2018 232,086 applications for asylum were filed in Austria (Statista 2019), whereby the number of refugees, due to changing refugee flows and more restrictive refugee policies, fell dramatically from 88,340 applications in 2015 to 13,746 in 2018 (application approval rate of around 40% to 50%). It is true that Austria has received and admitted relatively large numbers of refugees in comparison to the population in Europe. However, this does not allow for any conclusions to be drawn about the quantity and quality of current integration measures being implemented.

European programmes respond quickly and effectively

Although the EU has failed so far in terms of the orderly reception of refugees, their distribution among the 28 Member States and the dignified application of the Geneva Refugee Convention, the European Commission has responded relatively quickly with funding programmes, such as AMIF, Erasmus + or the ESF. Relevant funding priorities have been set and further funding has been made available.

Sensibly it was recognised early that comprehensive general and professional qualifications could bring maximum added value to all involved - including the European economy. Professional career guidance and accompanying labour market integration measures have been promoted from the beginning, but there has also been investment in developing additional curricula for social workers and social pedagogues. The initial feedback from refugee supervisors in the countries mainly affected, such as Greece and Italy, has consistently confirmed that such targeted further education does significantly help to professionally and purposefully support challenging integration work with often traumatised refugees.

Austria's national policy is increasingly characterised by exclusion

In contrast to European efforts to facilitate entry into society and the labour market through positive measures, national policy in recent years has increasingly been defined by exclusion and the construction of barriers to integration.

The traditionally high significance of Austrian academic formal qualifications and official documents for assessing persons and their (vocational) abilities has had an additional negative impact. A recent study (Kittel/Verwiebe, 2019) shows that very few refugees who have come to Austria with completed vocational training have been able to find work in their chosen profession - or at a comparable level of education. Often their attempts fail not because of them not having the required qualifications but due to the documents that prove their qualifications. A reorientation and relaxation in relation to accrediting (vocational) competences would be desirable here, e.g. with more consideration for non-formal and informally acquired knowledge, competences and skills as well as the implementation of application-related recognition procedures. Here, too, Austria can learn much from the outcomes of European education programmes.

These unfavourable frameworks are also reflected in the unemployment statistics, which continue to show increasing unemployment rates among asylum-seekers and convention refugees (about 48%, Statistics Austria 2018), although the Austrian average is falling (4.8% according to ILO, Statista, 2019/04).

Austria's integration policy is particularly counterproductive in relation to the vocational training of young asylum seekers. It is however to be welcomed that they are allowed to start an apprenticeship during their asylum application process. However, it is completely unreasonable that these integration efforts are not taken into account when assessing individual cases.

This leads to extensive failed investment and to increasing frustration amongst all involved, but above all it misses one of the very few opportunities to train urgently needed skilled workers for the prospering economy.

On the other hand, the fact that refugees - even well-educated refugees - are happily used as low-cost labour without any real short-term integration into the labour market, not only testifies to moral inadequacy, but also demonstrates how ineffective the level of educational and labour market policy know-how and perspective currently is.

For several reasons, the liberalisation and modernisation of the current restrictive integration policy is absolutely necessary, not least in order to not thwart further efforts at the European level.

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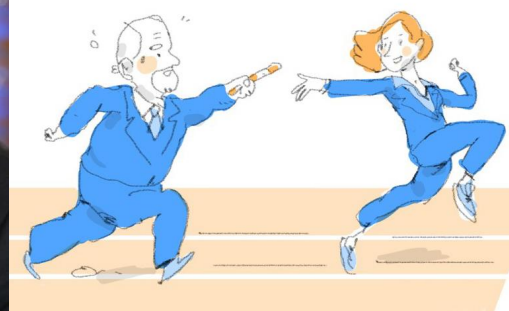
Better and swifter integration of migrants into employment - a German experience

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Many EU countries are reluctant to accept refugees. Unfortunately, the former welcome culture in Germany has also turned into scepticism, although Germany needs more than one million immigrants a year to compensate for population loss caused by demographic changes and emigration. There is a large shortage of skilled workers and company successors that will continue to grow.



Jürgen HogeForster



65+ YEARS - NEW GENERATION

Across the EU, more jobs are being lost due to failed business transfers than new ones being created by start-ups. Germany's deficits can no longer be compensated by immigration from neighbouring countries, e.g. in most Baltic Sea countries the number of younger workers will decrease by up to 30% by 2030. For economic reasons alone, migrants should therefore be welcomed into many EU countries. Furthermore, there are also cost advantages for host countries. When young people of working age enter the country, the high costs of living and training during their youth have already been borne by their home countries.

Excessive belief in certificates

The recognition of qualifications acquired abroad by the German VET system is particularly difficult and protracted. It often involves lengthy vocational (re-)training to obtain a German qualification. This is certainly necessary for doctors, lawyers etc. or for professional activities involving many hazards. But why is this also necessary for a normal skilled worker?

Germany's dual VET system is a worldwide leader and the cornerstone of Germany's economic success. The level of qualifications obtained within the system should not be scaled back. However, the point is not that all migrants should receive a German vocational qualification, but rather, if, for example, a refugee worked as a painter in his/her home country and it has been established during an internship that this person does a good job as a painter, then he/she should also be able to immediately begin work as a painter and be paid accordingly without needing to obtain a high-quality German VET qualification.

The situation also affects self-employment. For various professions, self-employment is tied to qualifications recognised in Germany, e.g. for trades with a master craftsman requirement. For many professions, however, self-employment is not tied to any specific qualifications. If refugees have sound professional experience and good entrepreneurial potential, they can therefore be trained as entrepreneurs in their host country within a comparably short period of time and then be quickly integrated into working life as company successors or founders of new businesses.

Frustration on all sides

During qualification recognition procedures and retraining, which can take several years, migrants are not available to the host country's labour market. Despite their significant (informally) acquired skills and experience, they must start from the beginning at an advanced age and are not allowed to work for a longer period of time. The counselling and qualification of migrants is carried out by dedicated institutions, that are set up in a way to be economically more successful the longer the migrants are under their care. Here, financing based on successful integration would be much more expedient.

The resulting substantially delayed integration frustrates immigrants to a great extent, since they are not allowed to work although they would prefer nothing more than to work. Additionally, the economy must wait a considerable time for urgently needed skilled workers and the fact that migrants do not work for an extended period reinforces negative sentiments among local populations.



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In contrast to these approaches, the Hanse-Parlament together with four partners is pursuing an entrepreneurial integration approach through the EU-funded 3-year project New Entrepreneurs, in which migrants and refugees are accompanied on their way towards self-employment (for a detailed project description please see page 23)

According to project experiences gained to date, German integration policy must become less bureaucratic. On the one hand, to assess migrants' skills, the focus should lie on practical skills determined during internships. On the other hand, support institutions should be rewarded exclusively according to their actual integration success.



Claire Dhéret

Olivia Sundberg Diez

Integrating refugees into the labour market - how can the EU better support employers?

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European Policy Centre (Belgium)

Despite the enormous benefits refugees can bring to European economies and societies, their integration remains a long and arduous process that requires improvement. Refugee integration has become even more challenging with the increased number of arrivals in the past few years. It has, in certain countries, increased the strain on national services dealing with the reception and integration of refugees and has contributed to the rise of anti-migration forces in European societies.

While integration policies do not fall under the core competences of the European Union (EU), the importance of the issue and its possible collateral effects on EU migration policies, the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), and, in general, the future of Europe, leaves the EU with no choice but to act. The EU should start with ensuring and facilitating access to the labour markets in the Member States, which is a crucial element of refugee integration. As well as being a source of income, jobs serve as a vehicle for social inclusion. More specifically, the EU needs to prioritise dialogue with employers, who play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between the initial reception of refugees and their sustainable inclusion into the host society.

Several EU initiatives have already sought to promote the integration and fair treatment of refugees. They consist of financial support, legislation, and policy actions to, for example, promote mutual learning and the sharing of best practices. However, despite a growing number of EU actions, there has been a collective failure to prioritise integration and to adapt the implementation of integration policies. National politics and outdated practices still shape how integration is managed and assessed, and coordination between and within countries is lacking.

According to the European employers who participated in a project run by the European Policy Centre (EPC), a Brussels-based think tank, and who responded to a questionnaire, the barriers to hiring refugees remain high. Three obstacles were identified as being particularly problematic: the complex process of qualification recognition (i), legal restrictions on working during the asylum-seeking process, together with a lack of job-specific training opportunities (ii), and inadequate and uncoordinated support from local, regional and national public authorities (iii).

The current political mood in national capitals is clearly not conducive to expanding EU competencies in the area of integration policies, and there is a high risk that the integration of refugees remains the weak link in the upcoming reform of EU migration policies. Despite such constraints and limited room for action, the EU has, however, the possibility to maximise its impact upon refugee integration on the ground, by acting as the interface between national authorities and employers. It should create an enabling environment that allows for the obstacles faced by employers to be (better) addressed at the local level. If the EU succeeds in doing this, it will also be able to position itself strategically to offer a counter-narrative to anti-migration forces.

Three key principles need to lie at the core of an effective EU strategy on refugee integration. They consist of addressing fragmentation (i); offering policy guidance to Member States to move towards sustainable integration policies (ii); and leveraging financial support (iii). With the current politico-institutional cycle coming to an end, it is the right time for the EU to ensure that the ongoing negotiations on the financial and policy framework that will shape the next cycle take into account these recommendations.

In the end, delivering on refugee integration is more than a question of competences and protecting the future of the Common European Asylum System. It is, even if indirectly, about the future of our European societies, the performance of our economies and the ability of Member States to address common challenges, which lie at the core of the European project's *raison d'être*. More details about the EPC project's recommendations can be found here: www.epc.eu/about.php

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Mother, migrant, highly motivated - the ESF programme Strong in the Workplace

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Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Germany)

It is often difficult for migrant and refugee mothers to find a job. Although many of these women are often well qualified and would be happy to work, they are less likely to find a job than mothers without a migrant background.

In Germany, they can receive support through a programme from the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs called Strong in the Workplace (Stark im Beruf), funded by the European Social Fund (ESF).

Mothers with a migrant background are women such as the Armenian Mariam Hovhannisyan. She came to Germany with her son in 2016. Whilst looking for a language course, she came across the Strong in the Workplace contact point in Bergkamen (North Rhine-Westphalia). After successfully completing language proficiency tests and a short internship for vocational orientation, she was able to start vocational training as an office management assistant. The Strong in the Workplace contact point is one of about 90 that are part of the ESF federal programme that actively supports women with migrant backgrounds with their integration into professional life.

The ESF programme in Germany addresses a relevant target group: one out of three mothers in Germany has a migrant background. They are far less likely to be in employment or tend to work fewer hours than mothers without a migrant background. Whilst almost three quarters of all mothers without a migrant background are employed (72%), only about 52% of the mothers with a migrant background are 52%; source: (German micro census 2017). However, about 68% of the currently not employed mothers with a migrant background wish to become active in the labour market (again) in the future, and 39% would even like to commence employment immediately if possible or within the coming year. At the same time, companies in Germany are urgently looking for skilled workers. With the objective of bringing both sides together, the ESF federal programme Strong in the Workplace provides assistance for (re-) integration into professional life starting from qualifications up to permanent employment. The contact points provide individual assistance to participants, such as coaching or mentoring, for concrete implementation and introduce them to instruments related to employment promotion, skills assessment and qualification and thus access to the labour market. Participants receive counselling and information services on all issues relevant to the labour market as well as to balancing family life and career. In Ms. Hovhannisyan's case, for instance, there is an all-day school situated near her place of work, so that she can easily reconcile employment with her family's needs.

Beatrice von Hall, project worker at the Multicultural Forum, explains the concept: "On a regular basis, we proactively approach interesting companies and have developed successful tools for this purpose. We ask human resources managers and executive board members for visits to companies, so that they and mothers have an opportunity to get to know each other in a non-committal way." It has been a great success so far: since 2015, the contact point has been able to find employment or a training programme for 65 participants.

Up to now, throughout Germany, the ESF federal programme (2015 - 2022) has been able to reach around 10,000 participants, with one in four participants having a refugee background. After participating in the programme, about two thirds of the participants knew then what to focus on professionally (employment, qualifications, internships, recognition), and 37% have secured a job or have undergone vocational training. At the start of 2019, the Federal Minister for Family Affairs Dr. Franziska Giffey and the Director of the Federal Employment Agency Detlef Scheele announced the start of the second three and a half year funding period of the ESF programme.

Beatrice von Hall, project worker at the Multicultural Forum e.V.,
With participant Mariam Hovhannisyan



website : www.starkimberuf.de

A short film about Mariam Hovhannisyan's integration into the labour market is available here: www.starkimberuf.de/stark-im-beruf/das-programm/httpwwwstarkimberufdefilm3



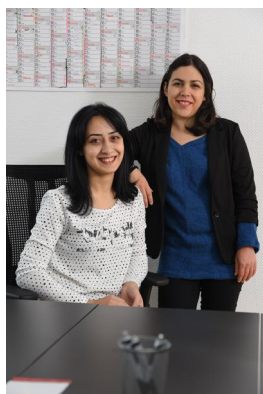
Björn Jansen

Federal Minister for Family Affairs Dr. Franziska Giffey with participants of the programme

There is a cooperation agreement in place with the Federal Employment Agency for the improved labour market integration of mothers with a migrant background. Federal Family Minister Dr. Franziska Giffey is convinced of the programme's approach: "In particular, mothers who have emigrated to Germany with their families and sometimes with still small children need a wide range of services in order to stand on their own two feet in the future and to earn their own money. With Strong in the Workplace we help them to tap into their full potential."

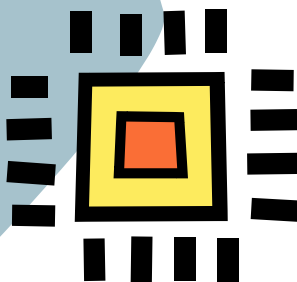
For Mariam Hovhannisyan the objective is clear as well: "I can only encourage all mothers who are looking for work: if you really want to achieve something, then there are ways and means available."

Further information about the ESF federal programme can be found at www.starkimberuf.de.



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Neli Demireva, University of Essex (United Kingdom)



EXPECT MORE - Exchange of practices on education and training models for members of communities in Europe

Markus P. Mandl and Philipp Lienhart
EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS (Austria)

The starting point of our project was the situations faced in Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Italy, Germany and Austria in 2015. Daily, huge numbers of migrants arrived, and it was rather clear that the political, social and human rights frameworks in their home countries would not change in the short-term, thus preventing their quick return home. During this time, some of the project partners had already begun facilitating job integration services for some of the migrants.



Visit of a best practice VET facility for migrants - Florence (IT)

However, when dealing with so many people at the same time, the partners realised very quickly that ...

- ...there was simply not enough experience available at the level of knowledge, concepts, methods, approaches and consulting services in the partner countries, especially for dealing with such large numbers of clients during a short period of time.
- ...integration approaches needed to be differentiated and adapted to the cultural and national background of asylum seekers and refugees; over-simplified and too generalising approaches do not work well.
- ...accreditation processes for formal education documents from outside the European Union are too underdeveloped but they are urgently needed.
- ...generally, there are almost no concepts available to assess informally acquired personal and professional knowledge, skills and competences, however such information is relevant to shorten and cheapen job integration processes.
- ...all existing guidance and counselling concepts and VET programmes for workplace integration did not have any real impact on the situation.

Generally, there was the idea of looking at other countries to see whether or not they have any good practices from prior initiatives, to mutually evaluate approaches for guidance, counselling and also VET programmes related to the challenges of the labour market integration of migrants in Europe and to transfer them fully or partly from one country to another. It was assumed, that there is a huge variety of knowledge, experiences and approaches available in the field of VET counselling, guidance, C-VET programmes and labour market integration all over Europe. Member States and their organisations have been developing a broad set of methods and approaches over many years, which could be utilised as a basis for evaluation, analysis, adaptation and transfer to the new conditions and circumstances.

Therefore, the EXPECT MORE project was initiated and its partners aimed to share their experiences, mutually evaluate approaches available throughout Europe against the challenges of the recent past and near future and to exchange successful approaches for (a) guidance and counselling, (b) C-VET programs, (c) labour market integration and workplace-based learning for refugees under international protection in one of the European Member States.

Methodologically, the project partners agreed on the following approach:

- (1) firstly, a format was developed allowing for the collection of information and for describing five good practice examples from each of the seven partner countries for each of the three areas mentioned above (105 in total);
- (2) based on an evaluation matrix with clearly defined indicators, the partners jointly selected the most promising good practice examples for successful transfer into the partnership;
- (3) finally, each partner tried to sustainably transfer best practice examples (fully or partly) into their own settings and frameworks. After working on the project for almost three years, we learnt some crucial lessons, which might be interesting for others working on similar topics:
 - indeed, learning about so many different approaches, concepts and ideas was very fruitful and inspired all partners enormously in their professional work;
 - the full transfer of integration models or individual initiatives within the partner countries was difficult to achieve due to a lack of appropriate infrastructure, staff, funding, legal frameworks etc.; however, the transfer of smaller elements, approaches, tools etc. was successful;
 - unfortunately, we experienced how much such projects are dependent upon macro-structural political, social and social frameworks; particularly the political and social developments in Hungary but also those in Slovakia and Croatia made it difficult for all partners to contribute to the project's work as was initially foreseen.

expect+more

EXPECT MORE AT A GLANCE

programme : ERASMUS+
duration : 01/09/2016-31/08/2019
main outcome : The project collects best practice examples from different countries dealing with employment consultancy, VET and the employment integration of refugees in Europe. Where possible, the most promising examples will be transferred into the partnership.
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Validation for inclusion of new citizens of Europe

VINCE - Validation for inclusion of new citizens of Europe

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University of Applied Science Burgenland (Austria)

The number of refugees arriving in Europe and moving between European countries is expected to grow considerably over the coming years. Refugees settling in Europe are often highly educated and skilled, but their competences are not recognised in their host societies. Refugees are often not aware of the possibility of having their previous learning validated and, in many cases, they may lack the documentation needed to undertake the validation procedure.

Having their qualifications recognised would be a major catalyst for enabling refugees to join the labour force or continue their studies. The project addresses university teachers and administrative staff, and especially the staff responsible for validation, and aims to equip them with tools so that they can respond better to the needs of refugees living and moving between different countries in Europe.

The project intends to enrich the existing validation procedures taking into account the specific needs of refugees, even those without verifiable documentation, and to develop a course for HE staff working with validation procedures. The project also intends to produce a comprehensive set of guidelines addressed to three different potential groups of users:

(a) newcomers, (b) teachers and (c) administrative/support staff, covering the broad spectrum of aspects/topics likely to provide refugees with the necessary knowledge of their new environment (validation, Europe in general, the country they go to and the institutions that will help them with their validation of non-formal and informal learning/VNIL and validation of prior learning/VPL processes) and thus facilitate their smooth integration in their host country. Therefore, the project's direct target users are validators, teachers and administrative/support staff, as these groups' indirect target users are the refugees.

Expected outputs

- peer-learning seminar to prepare the work, both transnationally but also at the national level
- updating VNIL/VPL materials from previous projects, especially from the project OBSERV-Net (519426-LLP-1-2011-1-BE-KA1-KA1NW)
- guidelines for university staff to use when working with newcomers
- training course for validation professionals who work with newcomers
- policy recommendations addressed to decision makers at the policy level to bring about a more efficient validation system
- VPL Prize awarded to the best transferable case study submitted
- interactive platform that will be useful to university staff, to policy makers and also to the student newcomers looking for help on how to proceed

International Project Team

- Eucen, Brussels (BE) - lead partner
- SOLIDAR (BE)
- Université de Bretagne Occidentale (FR)
- VIA University College (DK)
- Foundation European Centre
- Valuation of Prior Learning (NL)
- NOKUT (NO)
- Danube University Krems (AT)
- CPZ-International (SI)
- Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (DE)
- Fachhochschule Burgenland (AT)
- University of Pecs (HU)
- International Vrouwen Centrum Den Helder (NL)
- Club for UNESCO of Piraeus and Islands (GR)



VINCE AT A GLANCE

programme : ERASMUS+

duration : 31/12/2016-31/12/2019

main outcome : The project intends to enrich the existing validation procedures taking into account the specific needs of refugees, even those without verifiable documentation; integration of refugees in host countries; development of a course for HE staff working with validation procedures

website : <https://vince.eucen.eu/>

www.fh-burgenland.at/wirtschaft/forschungstories

EMEN - European migrant entrepreneurship network

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Migrants form an important entrepreneurial resource and make a major contribution to business dynamism. The OECD found that “migrants have notably higher rates of self-employment in Belgium, France, the Nordic countries, and particularly in Central and Eastern Europe”. Other studies show even higher proportions of migrant entrepreneurialism. A recent European study confirms the importance of giving support to migrants wishing to establish their own businesses. Focusing on entrepreneurs from ethnic minorities rather than specifically migrants, it found that ethnic entrepreneurs contribute to the economic growth of their local area, often rejuvenating neglected crafts and trades, and participate increasingly in the provision of higher value-added services. They offer additional services and products to immigrants and the host population, creating in many cities an important bridge to global markets. In addition, ethnic entrepreneurs are important for the integration of migrants into employment. They create employment for themselves but also increasingly for immigrants and the native population.

The European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network (EMEN) is a three-year project supported by the European Union's COSME programme. It aims to strengthen support for migrants from third countries who wish to set up their own businesses.

EMEN has established three communities of practice (CoP) which share information and knowledge and disseminate good practice on three areas that are key to supporting migrant entrepreneurship in the short to medium term:

- (1) coaching and mentoring
- (2) access to finance
- (3) professionalisation of migrant entrepreneurial associations and diversity management in chambers of commerce

Communities of practice (CoP) enable their members to learn from each other. A CoP is nothing more complicated than a group of people who share a craft or profession. The concept was developed by Etienne Wenger in his 1998 book *Communities of Practice*. He develops the types of activity that members of such communities can undertake to improve the way they do their jobs: exchanging news, information and links to resources; productive enquiries, for instance peer reviews; building shared understanding through discussions and events; producing assets e.g. by documenting practice; creating standards and benchmarking; formal access to knowledge, e.g. training and practice transfer plus study visits and guest speakers.

The activities of each CoP are developed to meet their members' needs, under the guidance of experienced leaders. They will operate continually via online fora and will also meet physically at the annual conference of the whole project as well as at workshops arranged on the fringes of other events as appropriate to their theme. A key methodology will be the structured peer review of existing good practice.

Moreover, the partner organisations and the members of the communities of practice will come together to hold a conference four times during the project, in different European cities such as Berlin, Brussels and The Hague. This will enable the CoP members to get to know each other and to discuss common issues with the other CoPs. The first Annual event was held in Munich in April 2018. This year's annual event took place in The Hague, on 20th June at The Hague University of Applied Sciences and had its focus on access to finance for migrant entrepreneurs.

EMEN AT A GLANCE

programme :	COSME
duration :	01/10/2017-30/09/2020
main outcome :	The three-year European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network (EMEN) project is supported by the European Union's COSME programme. It aims to strengthen support for migrants from third countries who wish to set up their own businesses. It will do this by networking organisations that support migrant entrepreneurship, so that they can learn from each other in three essential areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - coaching and mentoring - access to finance - professionalism and diversity management
website :	www.emen-project.eu
facebook :	@EMENproject
twitter :	@EMEN_Project
LinkedIn :	groups/13682894



EMEN annual event - The Hague (NL), June 2019



EMEN annual event - The Hague (NL), June 2019





Pictures, symbols, pictograms, graphical templates and a multilingual setting take a central role within the SIREE learning communities

SIREE - Social integration of refugees through education and employment - Wp1 / Transcending educational boundaries: challenges to the educational inclusion of refugees in Europe's 2 Seas Area

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Work Package 1 of the SIREE project aims to improve the position of refugee and migrant parents and students in the education process by tackling challenges at the school and community levels. Thus, it seeks to enhance their social integration and (future) position within the labour market. The project covers all educational levels from preschool to adult education and includes 40 schools in Flanders, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and France.

The project departs from a co-creation model and uses the method of learning communities (LCs). This means that refugee and migrant students and parents enter into dialogue with the school and local partners during regularly organised sessions. The different actors jointly discuss the main obstacles and propose, develop, and implement actions to tackle these. The project therefore gives the target group a central role in improving their own educational experiences. Project outputs include demonstration actions of how a co-creation model can be used in schools to increase student and parent involvement and a teacher training course that focuses on refugee and migrant educational integration.

Interviews and focus groups with refugee students and parents, educators, policymakers, and social partners have revealed a complex web of structural challenges that hinder the target group's educational integration. These challenges are presented in the report 'Transcending Educational Barriers' and include the absence of continued language teaching and support in both regular and adult education, the need for professionalising schools and their staff, insufficient individualised teaching support in reception education, lack of accessible and available didactical methods, mobility issues, newcomers' lack of information and knowledge about the education system, maladjusted school infrastructure, inadequate coordination between non-educational institutions and schools in guiding and supporting newcomer families, cultural differences and challenges related to separate reception education.

Some of the challenges specifically relate to newcomers, such as the lack of information, the need for a warm welcome in new schools, and psychological support. Others, e.g. experiencing discrimination and teachers lacking skills for teaching in diverse settings, also relate to more established migrants.

The report sheds further light on opportunities that policymakers and schools can grasp, such as initiating school policies that embrace diversity and multilingualism, support teacher training, provide continuous language support, implement an intercultural curriculum, and promote desegregated education. More can be invested in strengthening school-parent partnerships by means of cooperative working methods and improved communication, in interactions between refugees and natives, and in improving school-community collaboration. Also, better communication, collaboration and coordination between schools and public administration agencies, social service providers, health organisations etc. is recommended. Furthermore, transitions and links between reception and regular education should be strengthened, and the transition between adult education and the labour market could be improved when using an individualised approach, language support in the workplace, and when better coordination between the social service actors involved is established. Finally, the necessary (financial) resources should be provided to realise refugees' aspirations and talents.

The report informs the content of the LC-sessions, which were set up in the first half of 2019. Establishing co-creative LCs is challenging but they do represent a promising method of strengthening the educational integration of the target group through their continued dialogue with the schools. Examples of some first actions resulting from the LCs (April 2019) include additional information to newcomer parents on the content of religious classes in a Catholic primary school and additional mathematics and science lessons for students in a reception school. All of these actions improve the educational experience of newcomers.



SIREE AT A GLANCE

programme :	Interreg 2 Seas
duration :	01/03/2018-30/06/2021
main outcome :	The SIREE project (WP1) supports co-creative learning communities in which refugee and migrant parents and students participate to improve their integration into education, a key element for enhancing their local community and labour market integration
website :	www.interreg2seas.eu/nl/siree www.vives.be/en/siree
facebook :	@siree.eu

YMCB - Young migrants capacity building

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AEIDL (Belgium)

Entrepreneurial spirit among migrants runs high. In fact, the OECD's International Migration Outlook of 2011 highlighted that migrants are more likely to start their own business than their locally born peers, with self-employment higher among migrant groups in many North European countries, and particularly, in Central and Eastern Europe. The challenge is thus to support and channel this entrepreneurial spirit, ensuring any obstacles can be readily overcome.

Migrant businesses, however, have lower survival rates and are less profitable owing to financial, legal and administrative constraints. The YMCB project was set up to address these issues and help create a social and economic environment that fosters entrepreneurship among young migrants. YMCB is demonstrating an innovative approach to supporting migrant entrepreneurial activity, facilitating access to training, mentoring and finance in four target countries: France, Germany, Greece and Italy with a view to scaling up and replicating results in other areas.

A main aim is to create a Community of Practice of Young Migrant Entrepreneurs that allows partners and organisations working with young migrants and targeted groups to exchange experience and lessons learned, improve their knowledge base and replicate good practice. A community of practice develops activities to meet the needs of its members under the guidance of experienced leaders, and this project's partners have a broad know-how of addressing issues relating to migration, integration and entrepreneurship. The community of practice that is being created therefore builds on the existing initiatives of the partners and other organisations: for example EMEN, a three-year project to create a European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network that was supported by the EU's COSME programme. Project partners include the Microfinance Centre (Poland), the Centre for Social Innovation (AT), Oxfam (IT), SPARK (NL), Adecco Training (IT) and The Hague University of Applied Sciences (NL).

As a result, the YMCB project's community of practice will serve to highlight the work of organisations that support newcomers, refugees and migrants in setting up and developing their businesses. Specifically, the project will encourage networking among these organisations, fostering collaboration to enhance efforts to develop an entrepreneurial culture that really supports the creation of innovative businesses and social enterprises. In this regard, it will also support the establishment of business incubators.

For the four countries, the focus will be on building bridges between local business groups and actors. The aim will be to widen recognition of any relevant qualifications that migrants may have and to play a role in also widening the connections that entrepreneurial activity has with the operations of markets.

A key first step is to reach out to migrants through info days and local dissemination activities in order to assess entrepreneurial potential in the area. Such outreach will lead to the identification of suitable mentors and coaches: including peers who will offer training and advice on setting up a business. The project is promoting collaborative platforms that invite users to draw up their proposals and business plans in an 'open innovation' environment.

Migrant entrepreneurs often lack contacts who will support the development of their business ideas and offer feedback and a different perspective. For this reason, the project is promoting mentoring through workshops or direct meetings, as well as the organisation of workshops for training the mentors themselves.

YMCB AT A GLANCE

programme :	Pilot scheme (DG Grow, the European Parliament) outside of the funding programme
duration :	15/01/2019-15/01/2021
main outcome :	YMCB aims to create a coordinated programme to provide young migrants with the means to develop their own business through a journey of education and training, mentoring and access to finances. The approach will be tested in France, Germany, Italy and Greece, with the aim of scaling up and replication.
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facebook/twitter :	@YMCBeu



As mentioned, the project is also focusing on improving access to finance. In this regard, it is researching the willingness of financial institutions to meet the challenges faced by migrants and existing programmes for doing so. An analysis will then be presented as a guide for financial services providers, young migrant entrepreneurs and mentors/trainers in the form of an e-publication.

The exchange of experience in these areas and cross-border cooperation will be facilitated by a comprehensive communication strategy that includes the creation of a networking database and the publication of a best practice report.





Permaculture project - Cesena (IT)

Migration comes with social and economic benefits, but it takes hard work and intelligent governance and regulation for these benefits to manifest. As migrant numbers increase, so too do the number of actors working to allow them to integrate into their new society. Foremost amongst these actors are local administrations and volunteer organisations.

Local administrations have the will, and the power, to create better integration paths and policies, but they often lack the resources, in terms of finance, capacity and expertise, to deal with migration at its current levels. Volunteer organisations are groups of highly committed people willing to lend, indeed currently lending, their time and expertise to empower migrants on the ground. However, they lack the power to implement new policies, and do not have an overview of the urban system in which they operate. They often have a narrow focus, due to urgency, rather than a holistic perspective of each stage of the integration process.

It is obvious, given this state of affairs, that there is much to gain from these two types of actors coordinating their approaches. Yet, in reality, communication and even mutual understanding between these groups is often very limited.

VALUES stands for Volunteering Activities to Leverage Urban and European Social integration of migrants. It is a two-year project that will create enormous efficiency gains and improve the day-to-day lives of migrants by bringing city administrations and volunteers together.

Coordinated by EUROCITIES, supported by MigrationWork and the European Volunteer Centre, VALUES will benefit third-country nationals living in the cities of Amsterdam, Bristol, Brno, Cesena, Düsseldorf, Madrid, Nuremberg, Oslo, Ostend, Riga, Sheffield, Terrassa, Thessaloniki, Toulouse, Turin and Zurich. Participants will gain inspiration from the exciting initiatives that are running in each city and find the best ways for cities and volunteer organisations to facilitate each other's goals for integration.

A great example is Cesena's social farming initiative at the Centre for Permaculture that sees young volunteers, both migrant and local, working together to grow vegetable crops. Whilst they produce food for the local market, they also receive training and certification that will qualify them to work in agriculture. By coordinating volunteering initiatives like this, cities can ensure that the opportunities offered are well-matched to the demands of the labour market.

In VALUES, the cities and volunteer organisations will work together in Communities of Practice. Each of the communities focuses on a different theme, but all have a common goal: to improve migrant integration by exploiting synergies between cities and volunteers. Previous projects under the Integrating Cities' umbrella, of which VALUES is the latest, have had a mentor/mentee structure. This new communities of practice structure is an evolution based on the realisation that in the field of migration all European cities have much to learn and much to teach.

To exchange these lessons, cities and volunteer organisations in different European countries will visit each other, have work exchanges and develop materials together, including toolkits through which other cities can learn from the project's insights. The cities and volunteer organisations that participate will learn where the difficulties lie and how they can be overcome. But most importantly, they will come to understand each other, building lasting relationships, lines of communication and streamlined cooperation, joining forces to achieve integration.



VALUES - Volunteering activities to leverage urban and European social integration of migrants

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"That call changed my life!" said Sijo Josep about his first contact with Sheffield New Beginnings, "Volunteering has given me confidence to interact with people from different communities, and I gained knowledge of bringing communities together to tackle different problems." It also led him to his current career in marketing. Sijo's story is what VALUES is all about.

Permaculture project - Cesena (IT)



VALUES AT A GLANCE

programme : AMIF

duration : 01/02/2019-31/01/2021

main outcome : By connecting city authorities and volunteer organisations through communities of practice and staff exchanges, VALUES will improve structural cooperation and build partnerships in integrating third-country nationals

website : www.integratingcities.eu

facebook/twitter : @IntegratingCTs

New Entrepreneurs - New skills for new entrepreneurs: attraction and qualification of refugees as successors

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The integration of a large number of refugees into their host countries is an urgent and challenging task in many EU countries that requires the commitment of all social stakeholders. Refugees with good basic skills and entrepreneurial potential can be trained as entrepreneurs in a comparatively short period of time in their host country and thus be integrated into working life as successors or founders of SMEs, contributing considerably to economic development. The New Entrepreneurs project pursues this innovative and promising approach.

SMEs - the backbone of EU economy



NEW
ENTREPRENEURS



The dual system - a combination of vocational training and internship

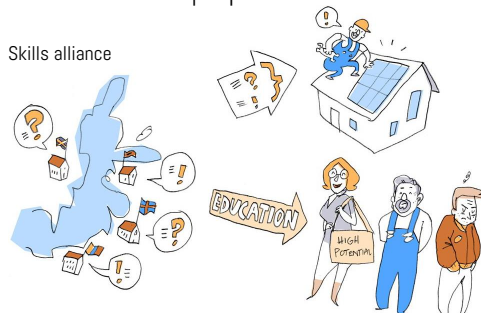
Many SMEs experience a critical moment when handing over the company to a successor once the owner retires, leaves due to ill health, etc. In fact, more jobs are lost annually due to failed business transfers than new ones are created by business start-ups. A major cause of failed transfers, and thus causing a substantial loss of jobs in many EU countries, is the significant shortage of suitable successors. This lack of qualified entrepreneurs will only continue to grow in the future. By qualifying and integrating refugees as entrepreneurs, this additional target group can make a positive contribution to successful SME business transfers as well as to start-ups, hence impacting overall economic growth. Accordingly, the project pursues the main objective of integrating refugees and immigrants in the best possible way into the labour market and thus ensuring SME transfers at the same time, through ...

- (a) swift integration of refugees into working life by means of training and promoting entrepreneurship;
- (b) recruiting additional target groups and increasing the number of potential SME successors and founders;
- (c) improving entrepreneurial skills to attract qualified entrepreneurs, to ensure innovative success, and to secure as well as to increase the number of SMEs and jobs.

The project is implemented by five partners from Germany, Italy, Austria and Hungary. The project consortium has jointly developed the tools needed for an approximately half-day assessment of entrepreneurial potential, consisting of a self-assessment questionnaire and expert interviews. This is followed by a two-day motivation and creativity training course, in which ideas and plans for self-employment are developed. The participants then complete several weeks of internships in different companies and simultaneously receive entrepreneurial training tailored to their individual needs. If necessary, language courses are also provided. Accompanying coaching supports the migrants until they have started their own businesses or taken over the running of an existing company.

As a result, the following 5 products will be available to the public, as well as to the 68 chambers and educational institutions from 13 countries, which are involved as associated partners and who will continue to receive implementation advice after the project has ended:

- blueprints for the identification of entrepreneurial potential and career coaching
- curricula for training to develop motivation and ideas for entrepreneurial activities
- curricula and examination regulations for general entrepreneurship training
- curricula for preparatory training and blueprints for the realisation of SME takeovers and start-ups
- a printed manual with all project results



The progress of the project so far is promising. Nevertheless, challenges have arisen, for example regarding the relatively unstable target group, making it difficult to plan far in advance. Furthermore, differences in educational levels between the implementing countries again show that flexibility of training and adjustments according to every participant's individual needs are crucial to successful business start-ups and takeovers.

Another important cornerstone of the project is the individual coaching process, which ensures that the specific needs of each participant, regarding entrepreneurial aspirations or other areas of life, are considered. While this is linked to a high level of financial and human resources, it is also paramount to the success of the project and overall integration efforts. In summary, however, the refugees involved are highly motivated. They have concrete ideas for self-employment and are eager to start as soon as possible.

New Entrepreneurs AT A GLANCE

programme : Erasmus+
duration : 01/09/2017-31/08/2020
main outcome : The project's main aim is twofold by quickly and sustainably integrating refugees into working life as entrepreneurs, successful SME takeovers can be ensured. Thus, integration efforts are supported, and innovations and jobs within SMEs are secured.
website : www.new-entrepreneurs.eu



Migrant student in optician training

mobinardo - Training abroad for learners and teachers at vocational training institutions

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The project's target groups

Within the framework of the project mobinardo tutors & trainers, teachers receive financial support in ever increasing numbers. The EU Service Centre (EUSC) has been further enhancing its project design since 2018. The idea is not only to support teachers financially, but to directly offer them a specific study visit linked to the integration of refugees within VET in another European country. The exchange of experience is even accompanied by a researcher who creates the study visit and works closely with the EUSC.

In preparation for a new project, concentrating in particular on professional VET staff development, two different groups will take part in study visits to Sweden and France to explore the topic more and to learn new ways of teaching migrant students.

The mobinardo project enables teachers, through short-term visits, to get to know about solutions in other countries for the successful integration of refugees into the labour market

The need is great: because of the high demand of teaching staff for gaining experience abroad, the EUSC has been focusing more intensely on teachers since 2018. The project continues to grant funding for internships abroad for a multitude of students in VET. However, greatly increased demand from teaching staff for further training began to arise, in particular due to societal changes beginning in 2015, as VET teachers were being increasingly faced with significant challenges in their daily work: a wide range of refugees aged between 16 and 24 entered vocational training institutions, just like in other countries. All teachers, regardless of their subject or fields of expertise, were being forced to deal with many different languages and continually occurring mutual misunderstandings. The overall aim was and is to integrate these young immigrants into the job market in the best possible way. With regard to school-to-job transition, a particularly high importance is thereby attached to the teacher.

Focusing on vocational education & training staff for successful integration of newly arrived and migrant students

Teachers deal with students who do not only display a high degree of diversity in terms of linguistic, cognitive or social competences, but who might also differ significantly in age. Learning success amongst this target group requires a strong orientation towards the individual's needs. Educational needs for individual support can be highly complex, particularly in relation to those of (former) refugees (BMBF, 2018). Since a change of scenery is an advantageous precondition for learning, the issue is now being addressed by German VET teachers and their colleagues from other European countries exchanging experiences. With regard to VET, teachers thereby explore and learn how Sweden and France deal with the preparation of newly arrived and other migrant students to achieve their sustainable integration into the labour market. Our project provides, for example, the following key aspects:

- getting to know teaching practice and language support within a vocational school
- sharing professional experiences with teachers and trainers in the vocational school system
- gathering information about forms of cooperation between vocational schools, companies and other institutions, e.g. job centres etc.

As the first pilot project in Sweden showed in November 2018, the teachers benefit from this support by gaining a European perspective at different levels:

Personal development:

Teachers had much discussion with their colleagues from Sweden and emphasised their "fundamental openness" and "positive attitude" from which they felt inspired regarding their own teaching. Working and teaching in heterogeneous learning groups, including students who have fled from their home countries with all the diverse social, cultural, psychological backgrounds requires significant relationship work. This must always be kept in mind, as the teachers claimed.

mobinardo
mobil in Europa

Mobinardo AT A GLANCE

programme :	Erasmus+ Mobility of Learners and Teaching Staff in Vocational Education and Training
duration :	01/06/2016-31/05/2021
main outcome :	mobinardo is an initiative of the EU Service Centre for Business and Vocational Education of the Münster District Administration in Germany. It is part of the Erasmus+ funding programme, which financially promotes internships for learners and teachers in other European countries.
website :	www.mobinardo.net

Technical / methodological level:

The integration of refugees in the field of VET involves the “same challenges in Sweden and Germany, but is handled in different ways”, as one of the teachers discovered. This significantly relates to the different school systems, as participants found out. Sweden, for example, offers more practical approaches for a fast integration into the labour market. The teachers learned that refugees can quickly apply directly for a specific vocational training course that is linked with a language support included within the subject teaching. “We run on a more theoretical platform, the Swedish do not. They have to provide the practice. Over here, the practice is rather provided by the companies. And accordingly, they have a considerably higher practical part there. And that is, of course, very motivating for migrants.”



Migrant student in optician training

Linguistic level:

As a side effect, the teachers put themselves in the position of their students because they were forced to communicate about subject contents in a foreign language and admitted that they sometimes were not able to express all their thoughts. This is a good example of learning more to empathise linguistically with the students. One participant told us that she found it “really exhausting, as you indeed listen in a different and more concentrated way than you do with respect to your native language”.

Opportunities for teachers of this target group shall continue to be facilitated and also be supported more strongly by vocational training institutions due to the existing short-term impact that we have already seen as well as the expected long-term effects of such practical foreign exchanges. As the activity has been so well received by the teachers, the experiences made are currently being developed into a new and wide-ranging project together with partners from across Europe.



GoodVET - Indicators of good VET practice for refugees

Katrin J. Posch
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The recent 'refugee crisis' is a challenge for European countries. The integration of refugees who are eligible to stay is one goal of the European refugee policy. One of the promising factors for successful integration is Vocational Education and Training (VET). At the practitioner level, various measures have been taken to integrate refugees through VET, but the exchange of information and experiences between the various

actors barely exists. Usually, different practitioners are confronted with similar challenges, but since they act independently sharing knowledge that allows learning from the experience of others is difficult.

In the current project Indicators of Good VET practice for refugees (GoodVET), the experiences of practitioners in four European countries (Austria, Denmark, Germany and Italy) are made available and evaluated. By means of these experiences, the project aims to generate quality indicators for successful training programmes in the field of VET. Hard and soft indicators that support the integration of refugees will be identified. These indicators will be transformed into a web-based analysis-tool, which will be available via national and international project websites and which will help practitioners to analyse their own VET programmes for integrating refugees.

The application of the analysis-tool will be documented online by 20 best-practice-examples, to be selected from 120 VET programmes for integrating refugees in the four participating countries. The 20 best-practice-examples will be presented to the public, particularly for the benefit of VET providers. At the same time application-oriented manuals for the qualitative conception of VET programmes to integrate refugees will be designed and made available online. This helps to avoid repeating mistakes.

The target groups which will benefit from the results are, firstly, practitioners who organise and implement VET measures (public and private VET providers, companies from different sectors). The best-practice examples as well as the information and manuals available via the project website will facilitate cooperation between institutions and refugees. Secondly, refugees will benefit from this project, because its intellectual outputs will enable the sustainable integration of refugees.

The project also aims to generate results that will help decision-making concerning education policy. As data and findings about the quality of measures taken to integrate refugees through VET do not really exist to date, the findings of the project are relevant in terms of education and refugee policy. All products of this project will be available via the project website with free access.

The results will be presented at multiplier events and through an extensive dissemination campaign. Due to the ongoing offer to analyse VET programmes by means of the analysis-tool, even after the end of the project, and due to the option to highlight further VET programmes public as best-practice examples, the sustainability of the project will be ensured.

The project will run for another six months and at this stage most of the outputs are nearly finished. One output is national reflection on the identified indicators. In general, it can be said, that much effort still needs to be put into the development of different VET programmes for refugees.

During the interviews with the best practice examples it was often said, that learning the language and the culture is the crucial for successful integration into the VET and the labour markets but also for integrating into society in general. Here the special needs of refugees came up, for example, they need extra support during programmes. However, as the project team is still working on the intellectual outputs it is a little early to provide any deeper reflections.



GoodVET AT A GLANCE

programme : Erasmus+
duration : 01/11/2017-31/10/2019
website : www.goodvet.uni-koeln.de

RevoT - Refugees in vocational training

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VHS Hannover (Germany)

The political situation in the Near and Middle East and conflicts in Africa are causing displacement and the refugee movement in the direction to Europe is showing no sign of ending. Therefore, many refugees will stay in their host countries. This represents a challenge to these countries, but it could be a benefit as well if integration were to be successful.



Good practice examples presented by learners at Graz (AT) conference

Refugees and people with subsidiary protection or other protection status as well as resettled refugees are a particularly vulnerable group, due to the forced nature of their migration and the traumatic experiences frequently associated with it. They also face barriers over and above those encountered by other migrants in making the successful transition into employment, considering that they have gained qualifications and work experience in very different labour markets.

Therefore, the current challenge is the successful integration of these people into the EU labour market through initiatives that prepare and facilitate refugees not only to understand their new environment, but which also make them active, productive and equal in their new lives. Vocational education and training is the path which could achieve this vision by equipping people with the necessary life skills and competences to thrive in their new situation.

For this reason, we have started the RevoT project aiming to improve and expand activities being undertaken for the integration of refugees. Identifying good practice examples of vocational training and counselling for this target group can also foster knowledge about and the understanding of the different situations and frameworks within the seven participating countries in relation to the integration of refugees.

The partnership is a heterogeneous group of institutions composed of adult educational centres, universities, VET providers and NGOs from Austria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain. Some countries have much experience in integrating migrants, whilst others are in the early stages. However, for all of them the challenge of integrating such large numbers of refugees is new. Due to their different backgrounds, each partner brings a different approach and added value to the project. This variety of experience leads to a wide range of good practice in the aforementioned field, imaging the different steps on a refugee's path from initial orientation to high-level training.

For a better understanding of the situations and frameworks in the participating countries, we have developed context analyses and have visited educational institutions in all seven countries. Finally, we have published a booklet entitled Way forward Supporting Refugees' Careers including 40 good practice examples and the context analysis: a statistical overview of the influx of the recent cohort of asylum seekers and present data on relevant socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, educational background) of the recent cohorts. This booklet is a collective outcome that reviews existing VET practices in line with refugee job integration in the partner countries. The good practice examples identified were selected by the partnership since they are transferable under institutional and social preconditions, although they reflect specific, context related, strategies.

After a brief overview we present the identified good practice examples in seven categories to enable readers and users to pick out those of greatest interest:

- general orientation within the labour market
- approaches to specific sectors within the labour market
- preparation for university
- recognition of qualifications
- building bridges between training and companies
- culture as resource for job integration
- involving refugee organisations

A general overview is provided in seven languages. Personal conclusions from participants have pointed that getting to know how all these countries deal with refugees shows that the images about our neighbours derived from the media should be revised. Everywhere we met people and organisations engaged with the welfare of refugees. This view beyond the horizon is essential for strategic partnerships and is an important benefit for the process of European integration.



RevoT AT A GLANCE

programme :	Erasmus+
duration :	01/11/2016 - 31/10/2018
main outcome :	The main objective: exchange of good practices of VET for refugees aiming to improve and Expand activities being undertaken for their integration. The outcome: a booklet including 40 good practice examples and context analyses from seven countries.
website :	www.revot.jimdo.com



Asylum-seekers undergoing a professional traineeship in Milan (IT)

- establish an innovative approach, based on the cooperation, dialogue and commitment of economic and social partners as key labour market actors, and to build or foster fruitful collaboration with other relevant stakeholders in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors

To achieve these aims, LABOUR-INT builds on the interest and capacities of trade unions, employers, chambers of commerce and industry and migrant associations. The project partners have a common interest in creating a stable and skilled workforce adapted to the needs of companies, guaranteeing equality of opportunity and treatment between national and migrant workers.

Therefore, within the framework of LABOUR-INT, the project partners have set up an Expert Group on Skills and Migration (EGSM) to increase the capacities of all players within a multi-layered integration strategy to perform assessment of skills and skills matching, according to the specific conditions of asylum-seekers and refugees.

The outcome of the EGSM is the definition of an approach, to be adapted to national and local contexts, that can help economic and social partners to develop actions and strategies aimed at enhancing labour market integration. The process is understood as multi-stage and multi-stakeholder, consisting of several stages through which a new labour market entrant should proceed:

- skills assessment and profiling
- skills development
- skills matching and placement

Several actors, including economic and social partners, public authorities and agencies, NGOs and training institutions, have crucial roles to play at each of these stages.

The LABOUR-INT project has achieved a number of concrete results towards achieving the improved integration of migrants and refugees into the labour market. Three pilot actions took place in three countries during the two-year project implementation period:

- In Belgium, 40 asylum seekers were trained and passed the admission test for acceding to VET (HoReCa and construction sectors)
- In Italy, 40 asylum seekers completed language and civic education courses and professional training in the HoReCa, ICT and mechanical engineering sectors. All of them undertook a paid internship and many of them have now secured jobs.
- In Germany, 13 vocational trainers and worker representatives were trained with the aim of preparing the workplace for improving the integration of asylum-seekers and refugees.
- A training manual was also developed.
- An online tool (AikomPass) was developed to assess the informal skills and qualifications of asylum-seekers and refugees in the metal and electrical sectors.

In January 2019, the LABOUR-INT 2 project kicked off as a follow up to LABOUR-INT. LABOUR-INT 2 will continue to pursue the same objectives by empowering the existing practices in Germany, Italy and Belgium and developing three new ones in Austria, Greece and Italy.

LABOUR-INT - Labour market integration of migrants: a multi-stakeholder approach

Mercedes Miletti | mmiletti@etuc.org

ETUC (EU)

The LABOUR-INT project aims to:

- promote employment as a key part of the integration process of refugees and asylum seekers into society.
- support multi-layered and multi-stakeholder integration paths for recently arrived third country nationals across the EU, from arrival up to entering the workplace, through skills assessment and profiling, training and job placement.



Asylum-seekers undergoing a professional traineeship in Milan (IT)

LABOUR-INT AT A GLANCE

programme : AMIF

duration : 01/12/2016 - 30/11/2018

main outcome : The LABOUR-INT project promotes the inclusion of asylum-seekers and refugees in the labour market. Building on the interest and capacities of businesses, chambers of industry and commerce, trade unions and migrant associations, LABOUR-INT promotes multi-layered integration paths, from arrival up to entering the workplace, passing through education, training and job placement.

website : www.labour-int.eu

twitter : #LABOURINT

WELKOM - Recognition of qualifications held by refugees

Giorgos Tsanis | giorgos@oecon.gr
OECON Group (Greece)

Project WELKOM has been developed within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme to answer the growing need for the social, economic and educational integration of refugees fleeing to European countries during the last few years. The massive and continuing internal and external displacement of people, especially from Middle Eastern and Northern African countries, has had enormous social, economic and political consequences for these regions, derailing their development path and affecting the growth gains previously achieved. Based on the conclusions of the Council of Europe and the Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies (2016-2019), the response to the refugee crisis is planned to be implemented based on three main pillars; the first and most important is the pillar of Education which stresses that focus should be given on (1) language skills as an engine for integration, (2) recognising qualifications held by migrants and refugees, (3) access to education for migrant and refugee children and young people.

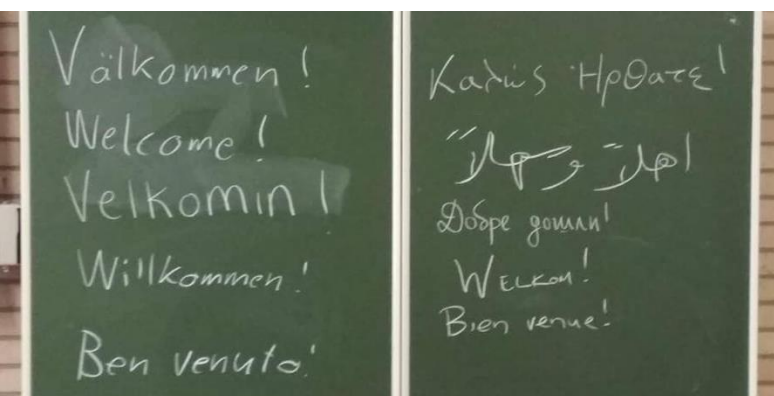
Therefore, the aim of WELKOM is to develop the transparency, recognition and validation of skills and qualifications held by refugees and migrants based in Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Italy and Sweden. Consequently, this will make it easier for the target groups to study and work in their host countries, leading to further social inclusion and integration. The project also aims to support and implement existing tools such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), the European Inventory on Validation, the Europass and other credit systems and quality assurance mechanisms, and add value to them. Hence, our main objective is to analyse and plan the terms for the valid recognition of skills and qualifications already held by refugees and migrants, to make them more coherent and easier to use, and to ensure a stronger focus on the needs of pupils, students, workers, employers and society as a whole.



The WELKOM project group at work

The partnership of the project has been brought together to form a cohesive consortium in which each partner complements each other in terms of expertise, skills and knowledge, as well as in terms of operational and functional background. More specifically:

- the applicant organisation, UC LEUVEN-LIMBURG from Belgium, is a renowned higher education institute in Flanders;
- OECON GROUP from Greece is a European consulting firm and a validated adult education and VET centre;
- EQUALITY CENTRE / JAFNRÉTTISHÚS from Iceland is an education provider and equality promoting organisation that supports refugees and migrants;
- MEDBORGARSKOLAN from Sweden is a nationwide study association that involves foreign-born Swedes and refugees;
- FUTURO DIGITALE from Italy works with young people of all backgrounds and creates opportunities for educational and professional development.



WELKOM AT A GLANCE

programme :	Erasmus+
duration :	01/09/2017-31/08/2019
main outcome :	The aim of WELKOM is to develop transparency, recognition and validation of skills and qualifications held by refugees and migrants based in Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Italy and Sweden. Consequently, this will make it easier for the target groups to study and work in their host countries, leading to further social inclusion and integration.
website :	www.projectwelkom.eu
facebook :	@projectwelkom
linkedin :	@comany/ka2welkom





The RE-INCLUSION project group at work

The project will define the skills profile of the practitioner working with refugees, in order to validate skills acquired in formal, non-formal and informal contexts, in connection with ECVET principles, and will produce an Open Education Resource (OER), in addition to the report on best practice, that can be used for the social and work inclusion of refugees: the Common System of Procedures for the recognition of qualifications and a report on training needs analysis. Two training courses, face to face and via e-learning, will be developed and tested. It will also produce guidelines to improve the practice of social and work inclusion in relation to refugees.

The partnership is comprised of eight partners from six different countries (Italy, Spain, Greece, Germany, Scotland and Lithuania):

- Studio Risorse S.r.l. - coordinator
www.studiorisorse.it
- European Education & Learning Institute
www.eeli.edu.gr
- Il Sicomoro Soc. Coop. Soc.
www.ilsicomoro.net
- Gemeinsam leben & lernen in Europa e.V.
www.gemeinsam-in-europa.de
- UAB EU Trade
www.eu-trade.it
- International consulting and mobility Agency S.L.
www.incoma.net
- Creative Learning Programmes Ltd.
www.clp-edu.uk

The main expected results at the end of the project are:

- improved skills amongst practitioners working with refugees in public and private reception centres and who implement services for the social and economic inclusion of Refugees and asylum seekers;
- development and improvement of quality in terms of the efficiency of public and private services for the social and economic inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers and for the training of partner organisations and of other organisations reached by the dissemination;
- recognition and valorisation of the “practitioners working with refugees and asylum seekers”;
- establishment of solid and valid formats of services, guidance and work inclusion procedures related to the life cycle and the different typology of target-group;
- creation of territorial networks of development, through the action of permanent local stakeholder committees, promoting integration between different systems: the social integration is based upon services provided in a net, through a co-participated governance of reception, work inclusion, education and employment services;
- promotion of the adoption by local and national policy makers of the legislative processes and best practice connected to the recognition and certification of skills, through the identification of parameters for the legitimacy of professional profiles related to the guidance within a national and European framework;
- development of a “validation culture” of the reception services addressed to refugees and creation of valid tools linked to work inclusion, with the adoption of a common system of procedures for the recognition of academic titles and professional qualifications of refugees/asylum seekers.

RE-INCLUSION - Guidelines for the work inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers

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European Education & Learning Institute - EELI (Greece)

The project aims to “photograph” the state of the reception system for refugees in Europe (supported by the EU Regulation 516/2014) and to provide a system for sharing effective practice, observed and produced by the partnership. The project aims to develop innovative methodologies and tools to enable European practitioners, who provide services for the social and economic inclusion of asylum seekers, to work more effectively with them.



The RE-INCLUSION project group at work



RE-INCLUSION AT A GLANCE

programme : Erasmus+

duration : 01/09/2016-31/08/2019

main outcome : The project aims to develop innovative methodologies and tools addressed to providers of social and employment services to asylum seekers or holders of International Protection, who carry out their activities in the SPRAR Centre of the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees, so that they can operate more effectively with migrants.

ON-D-GO - Developing the employability skills of displaced persons

Jennifer Nolan | jennifer.nolan@meathpartnership.ie
Meath Partnership (Ireland)

Migrant populations are a growing reality in European society today, and the ageing of Europe's population will ensure that net migration flows into Europe will continue apace for many years to come. Successful integration of migrant communities into social and economic life is essential if a cohesive and inclusive society in Europe is to be achieved.

The aim of the ON-D-GO project is to support the economic integration of migrants through the development of a tailored migrant entrepreneurship training programme comprising of a suite of flexible and modular online entrepreneurship resources that support the entrepreneurial journey of migrants. The project has two key objectives addressing the primary target groups of the project namely nascent and early start-up migrant entrepreneurs and VET professionals especially those with an enterprise development or integration focus. The project set out to essentially support migrants wishing to establish their own business in order to integrate them more readily into mainstream society thus enhancing social inclusion and also to support the continuous professional development of VET professionals working in migrant integration education.

The project consortium, which comprises partners from Ireland, the UK, Italy, Cyprus, Austria, Lithuania and Switzerland as a self-financing partner, designed new learning materials based on the needs of both trainers and migrant entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurship curriculum and learning resource toolkit that has been developed and which is currently available online, as an open education resource, has been benchmarked against the EU Entrecomp Framework and address the strategic priorities of the European Commission's Action Plan (2016) on the integration of third country nationals.

Since October 2017, the project team has been working with the support of the Erasmus+ programme to deliver the following five main outputs:

- (1) Enterprise Learning Curriculum and Resource Toolbox for migrant entrepreneurs;
- (2) a new in-service CPD training programme for VET trainers in the area of migrant entrepreneurship;
- (3) the ON-D-GO e-learning portal to support learning on the go for both trainers and migrants;
- (4) a library of inspiring case studies profiling how enterprising learning and skills development has assisted migrants and refugees to effectively integrate into host communities and the labour market;
- (5) an insightful scientific paper that captures the policy lessons from the ON-D-GO project to stimulate debate.

One of the most innovative aspect of the ON-D-GO project has been the use of technology to deliver enterprise and entrepreneurship education as it not only empowers the refugee and migrant to make choices about their own learning, but it also provides training providers and those organisations working with refugees and migrants with a cost-effective solution for the delivery of both formal and informal learning and skills provision. From the experience of the project partners, we have realised that whilst technology, such as smart phones, is providing a tool for refugees and migrants to communicate with family and friends, it can also be used by them to take control of their integration into the host community and develop their own learning and skills. All of the learning and training resources developed as part of the ON-D-GO project have been developed, reviewed and piloted in micro-educational environments in the partner countries. Demonstrating the adaptability of the curriculum in this manner emphasises the potential for further exploitation within the partner countries but also in countries beyond the initial partnership. It must be stressed that the issue that the ON-D-GO project addresses is likely to remain at the forefront of EU policy for the foreseeable future and it is unlikely that the demand for the resources produced will reduce any time soon. All of the learning and training resources are available in English, Arabic, Greek, Italian, German and Lithuanian and can be accessed for free at www.learnonthego.eu



ON-D-GO AT A GLANCE

programme :	Erasmus+
duration :	01/10/2017-30/09/2019
main outcome :	The ON-D-GO project is supporting the economic integration of migrants through the creation and delivery of a tailored migrant entrepreneurship programme comprising of a suite of flexible online entrepreneurship resources that support the entrepreneurial journey of migrants. To ensure the exploitation of the learning resources, we have trained 77 VET trainers to support them to become effective business mentors supporting migrant-led start-ups in their countries.
website :	www.learnonthego.eu
facebook :	@ondgoproject



Migrant Expo and Job Fair

Over the closing months of the project from May to October 2019, the project partners will host Enterprise Learning & Skills Workshops in their local area with the specific task of engaging and supporting up to 30 adult migrants/refugees, encouraging them to take-up the training and learning resources available through the project's online learning platform. The Final Conference of the project, which will be hosted by Meath Partnership in Ireland on 11th September 2019, will present all of the resources developed, showcase a number of new migrant-led start-ups in Ireland and host a Start-up Own Business Expo attracting more than 100 nascent migrant entrepreneurs. To keep in touch with project or to make contact with the partners in your country, please follow the project on Facebook or drop an email to Meath Partnership: info@meathpartnership.ie



VET courses are planned in cooperation with enterprises to better meet labour market needs

E.M.M.E. - Enterprises meet migrants for employment

Claudia Cultraro | cultraro@coeso.org
Co&So (Italy)

The integration of Third Country Nationals (TCNs) into the labour market can only be effective if all relevant actors fully play their part. As indicated in the Conclusions on the integration of third-country nationals, issued by the EU Council in 2016, the central issues for promoting the labour market integration of TCNs are:

- the involvement of the private sector in promoting respect for diversity and ensuring non-discrimination in the workplace;
- close cooperation with social, economic partners and civil society.

Furthermore, mobilising the full potential of workers, and in particular of migrant workers, is a real challenge that enterprises, vocational/educational providers and other institutions must meet. It is under these premises that Il Cenacolo and CO&SO, a network of social cooperatives active in the Tuscany region, are actively involved in the coordination of E.M.M.E - Enterprises Meet Migrants for Employment, a two- year project funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. The activities began in January 2019 and the project is developing an approach based upon local networks composed of key actors in the fields of:

- socio-economic inclusion of migrants
- vocational training
- support and representation of companies

The approach will be tested within three local contexts: Italy, Scotland and Spain thanks to the involvement of a transnational partnership composed of ten public and private partners. All project partners are all very active in the field of TCN labour integration, vocational training and employer engagement, and therefore E.M.M.E will ensure synergies and complementarity with their previous and/or ongoing projects and experiences. At the local level, the networks will co-operate on the implementation of activities addressed to employers and companies, as well as to migrants and professionals working in the field of labour market integration. The project partners are cooperating implement the following activities:

- engaging with enterprises to recommend they join the “Employers together for integration” initiative of the EC;
- focus groups to identify employers' needs and skills shortages;
- workshop on diversity management to prepare enterprises for creating inclusive working environments;
- common EU and national training on skills assessment to promote the use of the EU Skills Profile Tool for TCNs amongst staff working with the target group;
- support to TCNs for the compilation of the EU Skills Profile Tool;
- vocational and preparatory training (host country language and active job search) to provide TCNs with the knowledge and skills required by the labour market;
- providing guidance to enterprises, through the implementation of the EMME Desk, that will assist employers and HR staff to employ TCNs;
- post placement support addressed to both enterprises and TCNs in overcoming difficulties in the workplace.

At the European level, the project will involve:

- 100 companies through needs analysis, focus groups and training in diversity management;
- 45 tutors (professionals working in the field of training and job insertion of migrants) trained in methodologies and tools to profile and assess skills;
- 315 migrants will benefit from vocational and language courses and active job search training
- 100 migrants will be offered placement opportunities and post placement support within local companies involved in the project.

The transfer of the E.M.M.E results and strategy to other member countries of the European Union will be the major indicator for European impact. Belgium, France and Germany will all be involved in the final project phase and will host public events to disseminate and promote the project results. These activities will ensure the replicability of the project and its wider impact at the EU level.



Kick off meeting of the project
January 2019

E.M.M.E. AT A GLANCE

programme :	AMIF
duration :	01/01/2019-31/12/2020
main outcome :	Promoting the effective integration of third country nationals into the labour market through the active involvement of companies and close cooperation with professionals working in the field of socio-economic inclusion of migrants.
website :	www.emme-project.eu

MILE - Migrants integration in the labour market in Europe

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ICEI Institute for International Economic Cooperation (Italy)

Migrants Integration in the Labour market in Europe - MILE is a project funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

The project is promoted by the Institute for International Economic Cooperation - ICEI (Italy) in partnership with seven public and private organisations and 15 associates from Italy, Austria, Spain and Greece, including training organisations, employment agencies, universities, employers and employers' associations, local public authorities and not-for-profit organisations. The project will run for 30 months, from December 2018 to May 2021.

MILE aims to develop, implement and mainstream an effective model of integrated services for the integration of third-country nationals (TCNs) into the labour market, based on multi-stakeholder cooperation and focusing on the needs of both employers and migrants.

The project seeks to improve the practices of key-actors and promote a comprehensive approach to effectively support the workplace inclusion of migrants. At the same time, the project wants to show the significant added value and contribution in terms of skills, etc. - that migrants can bring to the European labour market and economy.

Organisations participating in MILE foster a structured cooperation at the local and EU levels, based on a triple-win approach for:

- employers, to get into contact with suitable candidates and receive effective support from employment services and other actors, to help them properly manage the labour inclusion process;
- employment services, to optimise their resources and achieve higher success rates;
- migrants, to receive ad-hoc employment support and job guidance, targeted to existing labour demand, and thus increasing their chances of being integrated into the labour market.

To do so, MILE identifies as being vital the engagement throughout the project of employers and a wide range of stakeholders working with migrants and in the labour market, such as local authorities, NGOs, public and private employment agencies, associations of employers, training organisations.

The main project activities are:

- analysis of employers' needs, obstacles, etc. in terms of the integration of migrants into the workplace;
- capacity-building for partners and stakeholders plus study visits;
- ongoing multi-stakeholder Working Groups at the local and transnational levels to share experiences and solutions;
- development and implementation of a methodology for the labour integration of migrants, focusing on women and young people, at two levels:
 - innovative, comprehensive and tailored made support for 120 migrants, including 20 refugees, including skills assessment, training for soft and technical skills, work placements, and post-placement support and job guidance (the MILE model);
 - improved and strengthened training, employment and job guidance services for an additional 400 migrants
- Dissemination and mainstreaming, to share results at the local and European levels, supporting MILE's transfer and increasing awareness about migrant labour integration and their contribution to Europe's economy.



Exploring the labour market in Milan (IT) with young migrants



Mile partners and associates

MILE AT A GLANCE

programme : AMIF
duration : 01/12/2018-31/05/2021
main outcome : MILE aims to develop, implement and mainstream an effective model of integrating third-country nationals into the labour market, based on multi-stakeholder cooperation, the mobilisation of employers and the needs of migrants.
website : www.projectmile.eu
facebook : @MILEProject

The main project results are the following:

- Stakeholders in the field of integration into the labour market, including employers, enhance their competencies in addressing migrants' needs and potential;
- A methodological scheme is developed, implemented and applied involving 520 migrants in four countries, to promote their integration into the labour market, via the structured and continuous involvement of employers;
- The MILE experience and model are disseminated and mainstreamed at the local, national and EU levels.

Join MILE! Are you an employer or an organisation working with migrants? If you are interested in hearing more about MILE, joining our multi-stakeholder working groups and/or taking part in study visits to good practices of labour market integration of migrants, please email comunicazione@icei.it



Volunteering promotional event in a shopping mall - Grosseto (IT)

The project partnership consists of six organisations from Italy (the coordinating organisation CESVOT, and CO&SO), Greece (Unites Societies of Balkans NGO), the Republic of Ireland (Meath Community Rural & Social Development Partnership), the United Kingdom (Volunteering Matters) and Austria (E.N.T.E.R. GmbH). The partners from Italy, Greece, Ireland and the UK all have as their mission, or as an important part of their work, advocacy and technical support for volunteering, whilst the Austrian partner specialises in communication and dissemination. EU-VOICE is co-funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund of the European Union. It started on 1st December 2018 and will run for 28 months to 31st March 2021.

The framework for the volunteering, the core of the project, is provided by the European Year of Cultural Heritage, giving the opportunity to reinforce a sense of belonging to a common European space. The project fits with the EU's Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (07/06/2016) for an inclusive and prosperous society through the integration of 20 million non-EU nationals residing legally in the EU, and with many studies pointing out how volunteering contributes to social inclusion.

The partner organisations' staff and volunteers (around 46,000 people) will benefit from EU methodologies and tools to prepare TCNs for volunteering within the cultural sector. The core project activities will involve at least 320 new cultural volunteers, of whom 70% are TCNs and 30% are women for gender mainstreaming. A set of valorisation activities (a documentary film on project experiences, volunteer caravans for dissemination events in five EU countries, local TV and radio programmes), intend to empower more TCNs, and to make local people more aware of intercultural issues and volunteering. Thanks to the partner organisations' networks about two million people will be reached over the long term.

As this article is being written, the first five months of project activities have passed. A three-day train the trainer event was implemented in Florence as a workshop participated by at least two representatives from each partner organisation dealing with the volunteering activities. Through facilitation by the two Italian partners and input provided by experts on migration issues, intercultural work and TCN integration, the trainers attending exchanged their experiences and views on how to promote the project work amongst cultural organisations, to involve and motivate potential volunteers, to facilitate volunteering experiences as much as possible for all.

Their debate and the materials they shared are the basis of the project's methodology. Contact by the partners with cultural organisations and institutions such as libraries, museums, heritage sites and youth centres on the one hand, and with migrant associations and organisations providing services to TCNs on the other hand have also started. The first cultural info-days addressed to host organisations have been staged as well as the first recruitment days aimed at potential volunteers. Soon a toolkit for volunteers will be ready to support the first groups of volunteers who are to be trained and who will start their volunteering in summer 2019. The volunteer training on active citizenship, cultural activities and the technical aspects of the activity they choose, which will take place in four partner countries, will provide material for the training booklet to be used by trainers.

An overview of the first data and results from these experiences will be shared and discussed among the partners in autumn 2019, which will help to fine-tune the whole project's approach to its core activities.



Volunteers' festival in Sienna (IT)

EU-VOICE - European volunteering and integration through cultural experience

Isabella Belcari | info@eu-voice.eu

CESVOT-Centro Servizi Volontariato Toscana (Italy)

European Volunteering and Integration through cultural experience (EU-VOICE; G.A. 821612 AMIF 2017 AG INTE) aims to support the integration of third-country nationals (TCNs) and to promote exchanges between TCNs and host-country nationals through a 25-day volunteering experience in the cultural sector for 320 people - mainly TCNs - in EU countries with high migration rates (Italy, Greece, the Republic of Ireland, and the United Kingdom).



EU-VOICE AT A GLANCE

programme :	AMIF
duration :	01/12/2018-31/03/2021
main outcome :	EU-VOICE aims to promote the integration of third-country nationals and their relationships with host-country nationals through shared volunteering experiences in the cultural sector. Volunteering and involvement with European heritage can enhance integration and a sense of belonging.
website :	www.eu-voice.eu
facebook :	@EUVoice
instagram :	@euvoiceproject

NIK - Newcomers in the kitchen

Hans Blankestijn | hans.blankestijn@casema.nl
and Elke Halm, Stichting Clusius College (The Netherlands)

What is NIK?

How can we put our NIK project into the spotlight? This article may help to achieve this, just like our website www.newcomerskitchen.eu. Clusius College is leading this project along with partners from the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Estonia, Italy and Belgium. NIK wants to improve the integration of immigrants and refugees in our countries.



Cooking together (© Hilda Weges)

By cooking together, we can become familiar with each other's culinary and cultural traditions, and this supports better integration. Together we are also developing attractive learning materials, including a game. NIK has a logo (see below): people with different colours, together, hand in hand, coming from all around the globe. This globe can also be seen as a plate, complete with knife and fork: everyone eating together. We hope you can recognise our ideas and objectives through the NIK logo.

Context:

Since 2015, almost 1.8 million people have come to Europe. As long as war and poor economic situations continue, more will come. However, they need to integrate into their new surroundings. This applies also for their children. They need to learn a new language, become accustomed to a new educational system and respect the culture of the host country. Additionally, second/third generation immigrants have problems with integration, leading to problems like low participation in VET, poor school results, high unemployment and eventually an over representation in crime. Through newcomers/students, parents and teachers cooking together they can contribute to a better understanding of each other and to successful participation in society.

Objectives:

The main objective is to develop IT-based learning material about food, both from host countries and from newcomers to achieve improved integration of newcomers and of other immigrants to Europe, for better knowledge about the culture of the EU and to stimulate newcomers to participate more in education. A more specific objective is to make VET more attractive to newcomers, leading to higher numbers of VET students of non-European origin. Finally, it will lead to higher participation of newcomers in the labour market.

Activities:

The NIK project has various activities, with four central intellectual outputs (ios):

IO 1: Manual for setting up local networks: to set up a local cross-sectoral network of VET schools, schools for general education and local/regional authorities. Implementation of this toolkit will allow partners to develop strategies for integrating newcomers and for making VET more attractive.

IO 2: Manual to develop attractive learning material: general instruction manual for teachers and students, about using (social) media in education. It helps teachers to create attractive lessons.

IO 3: Module for development of IT-based learning material: development of IT-based learning materials, including a game, which can be used on a mobile phone/tablet by students. This game contains recipes and culinary background, both from host countries and the newcomers' home countries. Important is the student game Play a Recipe; it makes lessons more attractive and interesting.

IO 4: Scenario for cooking events, including implementation: a tool for organising such a cooking event. Depending on the local situation, VET students and pupils from general education will participate. This scenario also contains additional learning material for students.



Multiplier events and national cooking events: partners will organise a regional or national multiplier event. Members of their network will be invited to hear about the NIK project, to see its results and to experience some cooking activities with students and newcomers.

NIK AT A GLANCE

programme :	Erasmus+
duration :	01/12/2017-31/05/2020
main outcome :	Objectives and aims: Contribution to integrating newcomers (NCs) in Europe and stimulating participation in education. Outcomes: IT-based learning material, incl. a game, to be played by NCs/students and used in lessons Culinary Aspects of Different Cultures.
website :	www.newcomerskitchen.eu

Based on the scenario from IO 4, partners will organise their own national cooking events. Transnational project meetings: NIK has four transnational project meetings. Early in 2018, we met in the Netherlands. We discussed how to develop each IO, how to focus on outcomes as well as what the role of each partner is. Our second meeting was in Estonia, at Kunstikool, which is playing an important role in the creation of the game. The third meeting is with our Italian partner Associazione 2050, when we will try out the game. The final meeting will be in Berlin in April 2020.



Newcomers are contributing to reduce the shortages in technical sectors

SHERPA - Support and help through education for refugees and other people from abroad

Manfred Polzin | m.polzin@mboraad.nl

MBO Raad (The Netherlands)

The issue of immigration and the integration of immigrants are high on the policy agenda of EU and OECD countries, both from an economic and a social point of view. The active participation of immigrants in the labour market and, more generally, in public life is vital for ensuring social cohesion in the host country and the ability of migrants to function as autonomous, productive, successful, fulfilled citizens. It is also critical for facilitating their acceptance by the host-country's population.

However, why are some European economies and societies far more successful than others in integrating immigrants into their labour markets and why are they better at offering opportunities to young immigrants to maximise their talents and obtain qualifications?

Recent OECD research clearly makes this point about large differences in the performance of European countries regarding integration and equal opportunities: Whilst in the U.K. immigrants are only marginally more likely to be unemployed than natives, there is a gap of 10 percentage points or more in other countries. Similar divergences appear in relation to other indicators: for example, the Netherlands, Germany and Finland all have worrying gaps between the educational performance of children of natives and that of the children of immigrants.

The reasons for these divergences are complex and varied, ranging from racial and religious discrimination to the different labour market situations across Europe. However, if we want to realise the very large potential gains from the current new wave of immigration, then policy needs to create the conditions for successful integration, both economic and social. Specific attention needs to be paid to the group of young adult asylum seekers/immigrants, as many talents within this group are wasted, for example due to their change of status when they reach the age of 18, whilst minors are better protected by international laws.

This is a problem that has been emphasised by all partners from the different countries. Research also shows that many young migrants make poor choices due to a lack of information and guidance. Rather they are often not aware of the possibilities available (and the routes to follow) in their new countries. The Dutch Verwey-Jonker Institute recently published a study about the educational opportunities and successful participation in the labour market of young migrants, that demonstrates two points:

- (1) labour market participation is lagging far behind, compared to their native peer groups;
- (2) choice of follow up studies is the result of limited knowledge of the new language, not of their intellectual Capacities.

The aim of the project is to share good practice and to organise transnational Learning Teaching Training Activities (LTTAs) in order to learn from each other and to contribute to more social cohesion and the better integration of (young) migrants. This also concerns strategies for guidance counselling to support young migrants in accessing VET programmes and qualifications, leading to sustainable professions, which is in fact in line with the goals of the Lifelong Learning and the Europe 2020 strategy. The CEDEFOP working paper Valuing Diversity; Guidance for Labour Market Integration of Migrants provides a number of key messages that might be useful as a guide (the Sherpa) to select good practices, like those on cooperation with businesses and social partners.

Lessons learnt:

The most successful approaches appear to be related to language learning, learning of the new culture and working or at least obtaining work experience.

Also, a solid enrolment procedure in order to get to know the person, their level of knowledge, their interests and their previous work experience appears to be crucial to successful integration.

A great impression was made by the Danish example, where legislation is very strict, but where the personal guidance of teachers and tutors softens the strict rules.



SHERPA AT A GLANCE

programme :	Erasmus+
duration :	01/10/2017-30/09/2019
main outcome :	The issue of integrating asylum seekers and other newcomers is high on the policy agenda of EU countries. Active participation of newcomers in public life is vital for ensuring social cohesion. To improve policy measures, partners from six countries are sharing knowledge through this project.
website :	www.mboraad.nl/sherpa

ISORESS - Promoting the idea of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development in small and micro enterprises

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Ethics in business, corporate social responsibility and sustainable development of businesses have been gaining importance during recent decades. This is related not only to increasing the awareness of entrepreneurs but also to practical implications. Socially responsible business does not focus only on generating profit, administrative and financial issues, but has also a positive influence on the environment, on local communities and on all participants, who are involved in social and economic activities. Implementing the assumptions for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), sustainable development and other ethical issues is a must in the present world of business activity.

ISORESS' horizontal priority refers to social inclusion since the project addresses mainly micro and small entrepreneurs including those with migrant backgrounds, who live far away from academic and training centres. They do not have many opportunities for development, especially access to business training in ethics, therefore we would like to promote social inclusion in training and in the workplace - fostering the development of social, civic, intercultural competences, media literacy and critical thinking as well as promoting the idea of the ethical business. Due to misunderstandings about CSR and sustainable development assumptions immigrants often cannot fully integrate into the local and regional business communities in this field appropriate training is a must.

As a sectoral priority we have chosen further strengthening of key competences in VET. The acquired competences and skills will be at a high level of expertise due to the commitment of scientists, lecturers, teachers, trainers and experienced entrepreneurs in the area of CSR and sustainable development. The developed material, available as Open Education Resources (OERs), will also shape the attitude and mindset towards these issues.

The third priority is related to systematic approaches in the professional development of VET teachers, mentors in VET and workplace settings. By developing training material available in digital form online for educators, trainers, teachers and mentors we would like to promote the idea and affect the attitude towards the proposed issues. Flexible training modules will enable the choice and adjustment of the training material and its implementation to various target groups taking into account their individual needs.

The main objective of the project is to promote the idea of CSR and sustainable development in small and micro enterprises, including those run by migrants by introducing relevant training programmes, sharing and transferring innovative practices, presenting the benefits of applying these ideas to their own business practice. Everyday operations, running a business and generating profit are the main priorities-entrepreneurs act intuitively in such areas as CSR and sustainable development. It is not only due to many objective and practical reasons, such as a lack of specialists, time or financial resources but also due to a lack of knowledge or a reluctance to undertake often simple and low-cost initiatives. Businessmen and women may not realise how these can positively affect their competitiveness in the market. Another objective is to develop professional and attractive learning material for entrepreneurs and managers (including those with migrant backgrounds).

The main intellectual outputs include a study of the specific needs related to CRS and sustainable development training in small and micro enterprises in the partner countries, a good practice guide, a handbook for trainers, curricula for training courses for both entrepreneurs and trainers, training courses for entrepreneurs and trainers, both online and in-class.



ISORESS AT A GLANCE

programme : Erasmus+
duration : 01/12/2017-30/11/2019
main outcome : ISORESS project focuses on the issues of CSR and sustainable development (SD) of small and micro enterprises. It addresses entrepreneurs especially with migrant backgrounds and management educators. Its main outcomes are online training courses in the field of CSR and SD for both target groups.
website : www.isoress.eu



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Training institutions might use the material produced in their training courses. It will be included in e-libraries as well as incorporated into study courses at economy, management and entrepreneurship faculties.

The consortium consists of six partners from 6 European countries: Germany, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Poland and Spain, representing various educational and ICT-related institutions with rich experience.



Joint staff training event, Calabria (IT). 25-29 September 2018

SME - Skills for migrant entrepreneurs

Charlotte Meletli | charlotte@integrationforalla.se
IFALL (Sweden)

Migrants or refugees represent an important workforce for host EU countries, who can significantly contribute to the economy, particularly if host countries can train them to become entrepreneurs. The project aims to create tools to support the integration and the birth of new companies created by skilled migrants through guides, online training and reports. The project will deliver six project meetings, one joint staff training event, six multiplier events and five intellectual outputs.

The objectives to be achieved are:

- good practice examples of activities for the social integration of refugees;
- concrete contributions for innovative education of disadvantaged groups;
- real exchange of good practice and cooperation within the refugee field;
- concrete changes in behaviour that reflect a positive attitude towards refugees;
- increased staff skills and abilities through Joint Service Training Exercises (JSTEs);
- developing entrepreneurial skills amongst migrants;
- enhancing the capacity of organisations working with migrants/refugees;
- developing networks and links at the local, national and international levels;
- developing cross-border communication and collaboration;
- improved knowledge of different cultures;
- fostering equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- promoting a modern dynamic environment inside organisations;
- increasing the quality of actions.



The activities to be carried out within the framework of the project are expected to have a profound impact at the local, regional, national and international levels.

The project partnership is currently developing Intellectual Output 4. This will be a collection of integration best practice examples from each partner country. This will form a comprehensive guide for busy practitioners that will prove invaluable as social workers seek to develop and extend responses to the particular needs of migrants and refugees in their communities. The guide will contain facts and figures, tips for good practice and the use of case studies to illustrate issues more clearly. These best practice case studies within each country can then be used as a starting point for making political change within society based on integration and accessibility to the labour market.

During 2015 and 2016, many refugees and migrants arrived across the whole of Europe. Many NGOs, schools and the vocational education sector have been involved in the integration process. Most of the actors in this field are motivated and have the necessary resources to work towards meeting the challenge of effective integration. However, what we have seen during the project is that not many organisations and schools work towards a common integration model. What is currently being done are individual activities within the integration process. Furthermore, what we have learned so far is that integration is a long process and there are many actors that should work together in multidisciplinary environments. Entering the labour market and creating successful businesses is based on good integration which includes language learning, understanding local circumstances and creating effective networks.

Therefore, the project outputs reflect and address this holistic perspective.

During the project we have collected and discovered many tools and resources related to entrepreneurship, immigrants and refugees. If an individual or NGO were interested in this topic/creating a similar project locally they could start by looking at the SME project results platform, which will give them a solid base of knowledge to work from.

Further investment into the refugee and immigrant integration process is needed as well as money for their general support. Every penny invested in refugees and immigrants will see a return and will benefit the wider society through tax income, employment and business sector growth.

SME AT A GLANCE

programme :	Erasmus+
duration :	01/09/2017-31/10/2019
main outcome :	The project aims to create tools to support the integration and the birth of new companies created by skilled migrants through guides, online training and reports. The project will deliver six project meetings, one joint staff training event, six multiplier events and five intellectual outputs.
website :	www.theskills.eu
facebook :	@Skills-for-Migrantsentrepreneurs-SME-466406560422253

SIRIUS - Skills and integration of migrants, refugees and asylum applicants in European labour markets

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and Francesca Caló | francesca.calo@gcu.ac.uk
Glasgow Caledonian University (United Kingdom)

Using a comparative, multidimensional and interdisciplinary framework, SIRIUS aims to achieve the following scientific, policy and public impacts: in terms of its scientific impact, SIRIUS is generating new scholarly knowledge about the characteristics (skills and qualifications) of post-2014 migrants, refugees, asylum seekers (MRAs) and how their skills can be utilised - therefore, contributing towards a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by refugees and asylum applicants in connection with their skills, qualifications, access to education, and employability.



SIRIUS project website www.sirius-project.eu

Furthermore, SIRIUS will expand problem-solving capacities relating to how to make efficient use of the skills of migrants, by bringing to light new data about how different groups of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers rebound from barriers towards integration - therefore, contributing towards shaping a more responsive policy framework that understands and addresses their needs, experiences and aspirations. In this context, we use micro-level research - by using biographical interviews and a film essay - taking a closer look at the needs of migrants and refugees/asylum seekers, with a specific focus on the needs of women and young people, vis-à-vis their skills (we will also use an applied game to support their soft skills development whilst looking for a job), the perception of the citizens in their host societies, and what migrants themselves consider to be barriers and enablers to potential avenues for integration, so as to disentangle those factors that are necessary to inform the design of integration policies and programmes that are inclusive to their needs and voices.

In terms of public impact, SIRIUS will reinforce public awareness about the need to use a different language in public debates on migration and labour market integration thereby building more inclusive and reflective labour markets and societies. An underlying contention of SIRIUS is that we cannot make a positive case for migration using growth and employment figures alone. We also need to replace scaremongering with solidarity and empathy, as well as a healthy dose of pragmatism regarding how labour market integration of recent migrants, refugees and asylum seekers can be promoted for the benefit of everyone. We need to talk about jobs. Not just the jobs that catalyse the journeys and decisions of migrants and refugees and the jobs that countries with ageing populations need to fill, but also the jobs and wages that many fear will be 'stolen' by refugees and migrants. This too cannot be achieved using general employment figures alone. It requires an understanding of the different political and economic realities of transit and host countries, and of the specific needs, rules and realities of different employment markets.

It is in this respect that the cross-national comparative design of SIRIUS includes European countries with varying degrees of exposure to the recent migration and refugee fluxes, diverse legal and institutional systems, contrasting degrees of political and institutional decentralization, distinct socio-economic contexts as well as variegated historical experiences with issues surrounding the integration of migrants (the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Italy, the UK, and Switzerland) which will help unveil where and how solutions work, who benefits and why.

During the first 16 months of our project, our work has advanced knowledge of the complex dynamics underpinning issues of MRAs labour market integration across our countries through macro data, comparative legal and policy analyses (reports are available on the website). We have also provided policy advice and examples of best practice to facilitate labour market integration of MRAs across our countries conveyed both through three integrated reports, and more specifically, through our policy briefs (available on the website).

SIRIUS AT A GLANCE

programme : Horizon 2020
duration : 01/01/2018-31/12/2020
main outcome : SIRIUS is a multi-method research aiming at:
(a) providing systematic evidence on post-2014 migrants', refugees' and asylum applicants' potential for labour market employment;
(b) advancing knowledge on the complexity of labour markets integration dynamics;
(c) proposing a number of best practices and a theoretical framework explaining the combination of measures, leading to an optimal outcome for a given group of beneficiaries.
website : www.sirius-project.eu
facebook : @SiriusProject.EU
twitter : @SIRIUS_EU

Moreover, we have created opportunities to share evidence-based policy recommendations with a range of actors not only by means of web-based communication and social media (SIRIUS website, social media accounts, newsletter, etc.), but also through the organisation of the first policy dialogue workshop that took place in Athens in November 2018 and the SIRIUS Festival that took place in Prague in May 2019.



SIRIUS

Skills and Integration of Migrants,
Refugees and Asylum Applicants
in European Labour Markets



GEMM - Growth, equal opportunities, migration and markets

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The GEMM project, funded by the European Commission within the framework of the H2020 programme, delivered an assessment of labour market inequalities of migrants and minorities in Europe. A specific focus was placed upon highly skilled migrants to Europe, who do not always find jobs in which their skills are used most effectively.

By understanding the drivers of these inequalities and determining how institutional factors account for differences between countries, we provided recommendations of great practical and policy relevance. The goals were achieved through using different research methods - experiments, in-depth interviews and statistical analyses of existing data - and through considering different determinants - individual, contextual and institutional. In this way, it was possible to compare integration processes and outcomes in different countries in Europe and highlight the factors that help to successfully integrate migrants and minorities into the host country labour market - to the benefit of both minorities and the majority population.

In terms of the general picture, using European data, we found that migrants who arrived seeking protection experience the largest gaps in terms of employment and activity compared to similar natives, followed by migrants arriving for family reasons, while economic migrants experience much lower gaps. In terms of occupational status there is less difference and economic migrants arriving without a contract do similarly as poorly as non-economic migrants as well as not experiencing the same improvements over time. The gap for non-economic migrants does close over time, which is due to these migrants investing more into the host country by taking further courses, improving their language skills, or naturalising. We also showed that these investments have higher returns for non-economic migrants. This means further investments in more disadvantaged non-economic migrants, especially refugees, can help to substantially improve their labour market integration.

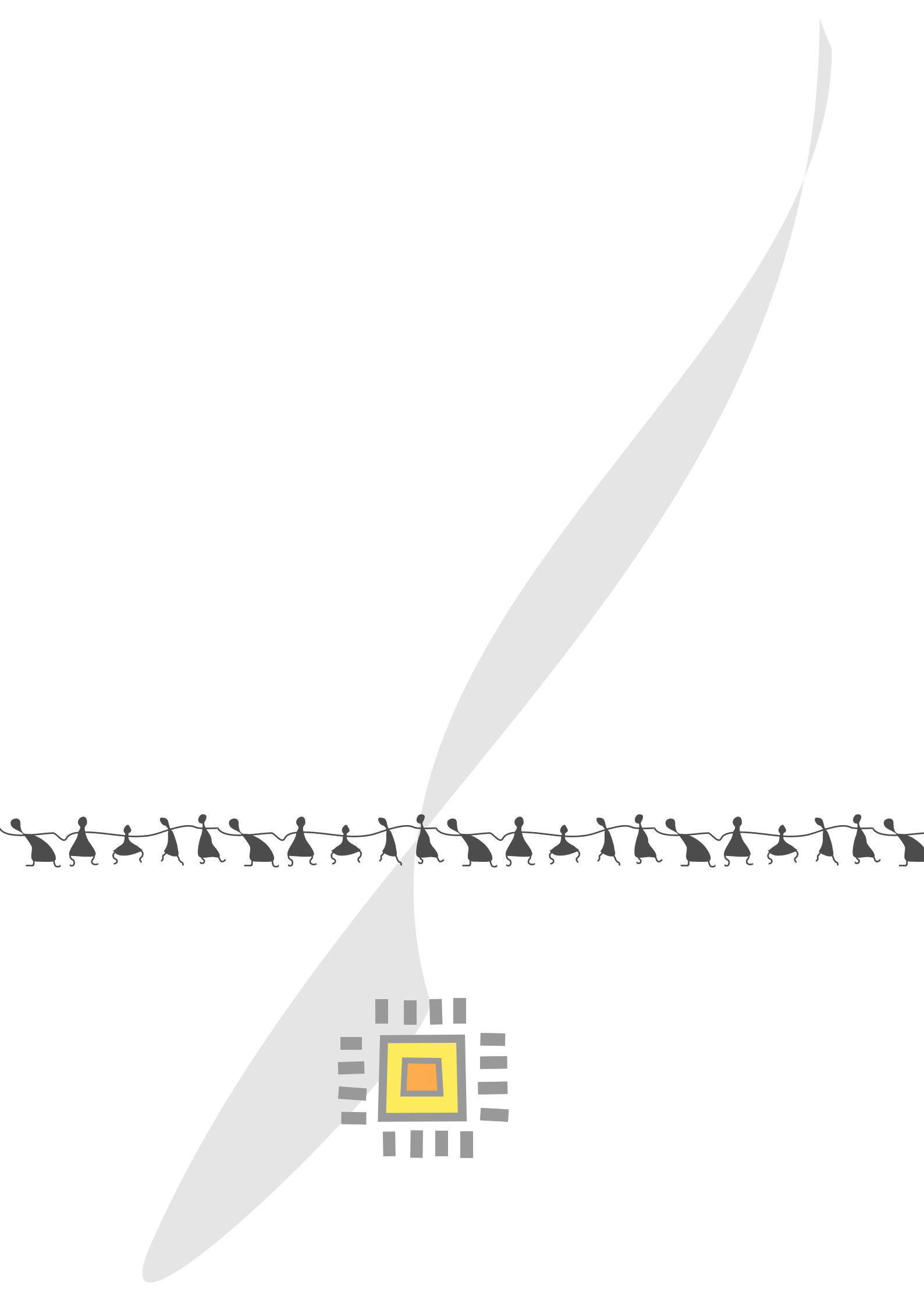
Using field experiments, the project found clear differences in the call-back rates of majority and minority applicants in five European countries: Spain, Norway, the UK, Germany and the Netherlands, confirming that overall, minority applicants are discriminated against during the hiring process. Applicants from the majority group receive more call-backs from employers compared to (equally qualified) minority applicants. The difference in call-back rate is significant in all countries. The overall discrimination ratio is 1.31, indicating that minority applicants need to send about thirty percent more applications than majority applicants to have a similar chance of receiving positive responses from employers.

The project also collected more than 236 qualitative interviews of prospective and actual migrants and experts from recruiting agencies. The interviews revealed a high diversity of the migration motivations of European migrants in terms of ethnicity, accomplished education, skills levels, economic sectors, types of occupation, gender. Macro-level factors such as high unemployment rates in the countries of departure cannot sufficiently explain aspirations for mobility. The individual strategies and experiences of migration need to be analysed and understood in different types of contexts. Our analysis also underlined the significance of the city as an attractive force for migrants. The image of London and Berlin as global cities offering high quality work and living and a variety of multicultural experiences entice mainly young Europeans who are not only in search of better job opportunities, but also a better lifestyle and the possibility for autonomy and adventure. Improved cooperation between public and private agencies would foster more support for labour migrants, guaranteeing their rights and improving their work-family life balance despite some of the disruptive aspects of the migration experience.

This is just brief overview of some of the themes that the project touched upon. More information can be found on our website: www.gemm2020.eu

GEMM AT A GLANCE

programme : Horizon 2020
duration : 01/09/2015-31/12/2019
main outcome : The GEMM project delivers an assessment of labour market inequalities of migrants and minorities in Europe. The project highlights that migrant and minority individuals are embedded in a social and institutional context, which affects ethnic inequality and thus the labour market opportunities in Europe.
website : www.gemm2020.eu
facebook/twitter : @GEMM2020



The Job to Stay partnership:



Coordinator / www.fhm-mittelstand.de



IHK-Projektgesellschaft mbH
OSTBRANDENBURG

www.ihk-projekt.de



www.enter-network.eu



www.european-neighbours.net



www.formazione.net



www.upr.si



www.filantropija.org



www.associationdyssee.fr



www.vsp-ggmbh.de

Quo vadis, homo?

The European Union at a crossroads
concerning the vocational integration of refugees
- green paper from grassroots projects

published by Job to Stay – Sustainable Integration of
Low-skilled Refugees into the Tourism Labour Market
(2017-1-DE02-KA202-004272)



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