



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

ERASMUS+ KA2 – STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR ADULT EDUCATION



Green Paper

In the framework of the project

“Vocational Language for Care and New Opportunities for Migrants”

Project No. 2015-1-NO01-KA204-013235



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. Statistical Profile of Migrants	3
2.1. Migrants in the EU	3
2.2. Migrants in the V.O.L.C.A.N.O. Courses	3
3. Issues and Recommendations	5
3.1. The Education Sector	5
3.1.1. General Education	5
3.1.2. Language Teaching	6
3.2. The Employment Sector	8
3.3. The Healthcare Sector	9
4. Conclusion	11

1. INTRODUCTION

The current migrant situation in Europe presents a pressing issue which requires a careful and well-planned approach. Wars in the Middle East have forced millions of people to flee their homes and seek refuge in European countries. Many of them have lost all their documents and diplomas in the process, further hindering their integration and employment in another country. The increase in the number of migrants in all of the European countries creates challenging situations and new problems that require clear guidelines and new ideas to be successfully addressed.

Currently, the major issues that need to be addressed include the recognition of migrants' qualifications; the continuation of their education; and the education of teachers involved in further education. These are precisely the topics explored in this document, with the aim of presenting not only current problems which migrants in Europe face, but recommendations for their successful resolution as well. This document can also be used as a practical tool providing recommendations for addressing current problems in Europe regarding migrants and their employment in the healthcare sector specifically.

In order to address these forementioned problems, the key target groups – employers, stakeholders in the education sector, local and European policy makers – need to be addressed. The aim of this document is to address the twin issues of language education and migrant employment and by doing so, raise awareness of the importance of adequate language education for migrants, which includes the need for language courses tailored to migrants' fluency and job-specific courses, as well as labour market opportunities for migrants.

This document includes statistics, problems and their possible solutions for the employment of migrants in the healthcare sector in Croatia, Italy, Germany, Norway and Scotland. It comprises an overview of the situation in these European countries; a list of specific issues regarding general education, language teaching, employment, and healthcare, as well as recommendations for their solution. The conclusion suggests further research possibilities on this topic regarding employment of migrants on a regional level.

2. STATISTICAL PROFILE OF MIGRANTS

2.1. Migrants in the EU

According to Eurostat data from March 2017¹ on migration population statistics, a total of 4.7 million people immigrated to one of the EU-28 Member States during 2015. Among these 4.7 million immigrants during 2015, there were an estimated 2.4 million citizens from non-member countries, and some 19 thousand stateless people. Germany reported the largest total number of immigrants, followed by the United Kingdom, France, Spain and Italy.

The new EU-28 citizens were mainly from Africa (31 % of the total number of citizenships acquired), North and South America (14 %), Asia (21 %), and Europe outside of the EU-28 (20 %). All of the new EU-28 citizens upon arrival have the status of asylum seekers. After arriving in a EU-28 state, they have to wait for their requests for asylum to be processed and see if they will be granted leave to remain. However, the number of people from non-member countries who acquired citizenship of an EU Member State in 2015, decreased by 8 % with respect to 2014.

As a whole, the foreign population is younger than the national population (showing a greater proportion of relatively young working age adults), and is comprised of slightly more men than women (56 % compared with 44 %).

OECD data² indicates that immigrant workers are affected to a greater extent by unemployment, than native-born workers in European countries that have traditionally received migrants.

2.2. Migrants in the V.O.L.C.A.N.O. Courses

There was a total of 174 migrants included in the vocational language courses organised by the V.O.L.C.A.N.O. project partners.

Courses held by the Norwegian partner, Folkeuniversitetet Øst. The majority of the participants were on the A2-B1 language level, and numbered 26 participants. Out of those, three had elementary school, one had secondary school, 18 had a background in the healthcare sector (13 of these nurses), and there were three who had other higher education. After completing the courses, 15 participants got a job or a job placement and 5 received authorisation.

The Scottish partner, Bridges Programmes, offered 3 courses on the A2, B1, B2, and C1 language levels, with a total of 50 participants. The majority of participants (19) had no previous education, 5 had education equivalent to a technician/apprentice, 5 a high school diploma, 11 year one of a degree, and 8 had an associate degree. Upon completion of the course, 11 participants secured a job, 29 a job placement, 1 is self-employed, and 7 will continue their education.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics

² <https://data.oecd.org/migration/foreign-born-unemployment.htm>

The A2-B1 language level courses organised by Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham e.V., the German partner, included 36 participants. More than 30 % of the participants had a background in the field of care at the time courses started. After the courses, 10 % started vocational training in the field of care.

The Italian partner, Associazione N.E.T. Networking Education & Training, offered two courses at the A1/A2 and B1/B2 levels, numbering 30 participants. Most of the participants graduated middle school (22), 3 primary school, and 5 secondary school. After finishing the course, 21 participants were employed.

The Adult Education Institution Dante, the Croatian partner, held 2 courses on the A2 and B1 level, with a total of 33 participants. Out of that number, 11 of them graduated secondary school, 10 had an associate degree and 12 graduate degree. At the end of the course, 5 participants received job placements in the healthcare sector and are continuing their vocational education.

3. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have detected specific issues relating to three main sectors: the education, employment, and healthcare sector. We offer solutions for issues detected in each of the sectors, which should be taken as practical suggestions to all relevant stakeholders (educational institutions, employers, bodies of local, regional, and national government). All recommendations for solving the issues are listed according to relevant stakeholder level (local, national, and European).

3.1. The Education Sector

3.1.1. General Education

a. Insufficient resources, knowledge, and skills for educating the migrant population

at the local/national level:

- Educational workshops for teaching staff who work with migrants and vulnerable groups should be organised, encouraging the development of skills and competences for implementing intercultural education.
- For a more effective approach to teaching migrants, specific areas need to be addressed in further teacher training: migrants' social, psychological, educational, and language background; their likely situation and real-life needs in the host community; intercultural issues, including diversity and racism; plurilingualism, pluriculturalism.
- Teaching staff should be monitored and constant critical review and development of teachers encouraged.
- The Ministry of Education and other specialised local or national institutions could be included in the process of training teaching staff.

at the European level:

- Certain qualities of teachers working with migrants should be required (authenticity; strong self-awareness; intrinsic motivation for social transformation; critical (auto) reflection; constantly questioning their role as socio-cultural mediators and knowledge transmitters).
- Institutions should exchange good educational practices at the international level, ensuring a high quality of the educational offer.

b. Lifelong education for migrants is not sufficiently supported and developed

at the local/national level:

- The local population and migrants should have equal rights to (free) education.
- Positive effects of lifelong education on professional and personal development need to be promoted.

- Access to academic education should be facilitated (different ways of assessing knowledge devised, that are not related to the local context or proficiency in the local language; new assessment methods used that do not require the possession of a diploma from the country of origin).

at the European level:

- Projects promoting direct involvement of migrants in the education system should be developed.
- European scholarship funds for the education of migrants could be established.
- Specialised courses for migrants in the European Union member states could be financed.

c. Socio-cultural issues and a mutual lack of understanding

at the local level:

- An intercultural approach to education should be developed and applied, used with both the local and migrant population.
- Cultural exchange workshops could be organised for the local and immigrant population to gain understanding of each other's culture and establish a critical distance toward their own cultural practices.
- Thematic and educational workshops could be organised for teaching staff that works with migrants and vulnerable groups.

at the European level:

- Diversity needs to be promoted as a positive value.

3.1.2. Language Teaching

a. Language programmes do not meet migrants' language needs for their personal, social, and working life

- When designing language courses, migrants' immediate and medium-term needs should be identified, corresponding communicative objectives defined, drawing on and adapting the scales of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as required, for example, for speaking to other citizens in non-formal communicative situations, writing a CV for a job, etc.
- Educational institutions and employers should jointly create teaching curricula.
- Market and needs analyses should be carried out to determine the skills required of employees.

b. Language programmes follow a standardised model that does not accommodate the diversity of migrants

- The language offer should reflect the considerable differences in terms of migrants' personal situation, their needs and capacities, prior educational and language learning history, and time needed or available for learning the language.

c. Language and culture courses offered to migrants do not meet internationally accepted standards of quality assurance

- The courses should be effective, tailor-made, of a high quality, designed and delivered by properly trained professionals with well-equipped facilities. While this solution may be more costly, it has direct and positive results in terms of migrants' attendance, motivation and learning outcomes.

d. There is no variation in language skills requirements in language courses

- Proficiency levels should be defined in a realistic and flexible manner, reflecting actual needs and capacities of migrants. While a person might need an A2 level of knowledge for spoken interaction, they might only require reading or written interaction skills at an A1 level. We also need to take into account that the majority of speakers of a language do not need to perform tasks at the higher CEFR levels on a daily basis.

e. Vocational language training is non-existent or inadequate

- Migrants need to develop communication skills for professional and/or employment-related purposes to be able to function in a work environment. Vocational language teaching should be separated from general language training and basic professional skills courses. Skilled non-native speakers will derive most benefit from language training that is suited to their specific needs. There are several varieties of vocational language teaching: a sector may be considered in a very broad manner, with regard to specific occupations, or even specific posts within a given occupation.

f. Migrants' independent learning skills are not being sufficiently developed

- In order to be able to independently acquire additional competences required for work or building social networks once the course is completed, migrants will need to be able to manage their learning. The European Language Portfolio (ELP) should be used to support further development of learning skills and enable migrants to relate their progress to the proficiency levels.

g. Migrants' lack of motivation for learning the local language(s)

- Different educational approaches and activities that go beyond the traditional teacher-centred approach need to be used in the classroom (discussion, didactic games, role plays of everyday situations, word and mental maps).

- Lessons outside the classroom could be used, encouraging interaction with the local population.

- All direct and indirect benefits of knowing the local languages should be demonstrated.

- A comfortable and safe working environment must be ensured.
- The teacher should show understanding for learning difficulties that learners can encounter.

h. Migrants' languages of origin are not valued

- Migrants' languages of origin are an essential part of their identity and play an important role in the integration process. We should show that they are valued and accepted, encouraging migrants to transmit them to their children.

3.2. The Employment Sector

a. Insufficient awareness of the positive aspects of employing refugees and migrants

at the local and national level:

- Anti-discrimination policies should be implemented and the importance of intercultural competences emphasised.
- Results of case studies on hiring migrants that indicate positive and successful outcomes of such practices should be disseminated to all potential stakeholders.

at the European level:

- The contribution of employed migrants to the European Union's economy (revitalisation of neglected occupations and crafts; self-employment; employment of other migrants and local residents; creating the need for new goods and services; connecting the global market) should be recognised.

b. Employers' limited knowledge about the benefits of employing migrants

at the local level:

- A variety of workshops should be organised to educate employers and show them all the benefits of an intercultural working environment and the opportunities to gain new knowledge and skills created by intercultural dialogue.
- Employers need to be informed about financial incentives for hiring migrants and refugees.

at the national level:

- Employers should be encouraged to actively participate in trainings and other programmes for the inclusion of migrant staff in the job market.
- Job fairs could be organised for migrants, educational institutes, and employers to learn from, engage, and connect with each other.

at the European level:

- Organised in-work support should be offered to employers.
- Employers need to be informed about projects and programmes for (financial) support offered at the European level.

c. A lack of support for employing migrants

at the local level:

- Incentive programmes and training courses should be developed to enable faster inclusion of migrants in the labour market.

at the national level:

- A new model of verifying knowledge and skills should be developed to avoid the necessity of relying on diplomas and certificates from the refugees' mother countries (people often do not have the relevant documents in their possession, so bureaucratic difficulties slow down the employment process in practice).
- A support system for employers should be set up to aid them in the employment of migrant staff.

at the European level:

- The process of retraining needs to be systematised and accelerated.
- The development of cooperation and international programmes should be encouraged.

3.3. The Healthcare Sector

a. Conflicts in the workplace relating to cultural differences

at the local level:

- Workshops could be organised to develop employees' intercultural skills.
- Communication skills of all employees should continuously be developed.

at the European level:

- Diversity and solidarity should be promoted as positive values and desirable qualities.
- Awareness of the values promoted in the workplace and within the sector should be developed.

b. A lack of long-term investment in educating migrant/refugee employees

at the local and national level:

- Lifelong education within the healthcare sector should be promoted, emphasising the benefits of investing in employees' further education and acquisition of special skills.

at the European level:

- The European system of values should be re-conceptualised.

c. Not recognising the full potential of the migrant workforce in the healthcare sector

at the local level:

- The sector should become more permeable and accessible for migrant workers.

- Ongoing training for migrant staff in the healthcare sector should be organised.

at the national and European level:

- An analysis of the inclusion of migrants in the healthcare sector should be made (How much of the workforce is currently missing? What can migrants offer to the sector and its users from their international experiences? What are the long-term benefits of including the migrant workforce in the healthcare sector at the national level? How does this contribute to the integration of migrants into the European society?).

d. The required language level is too high in relation to the real needs of the workplace

at the local level:

- People with linguistic competences at the A2 or B1 level could be systematically employed, providing them with an opportunity to use the skills they already possess and apply their foreign experience.

- Further language learning could be done in the workplace, with a possible lack of qualifications compensated by learning through work, thereby creating opportunities for advancement in the sector.

4. CONCLUSION

Integration is a challenge both for people settling in a new country and their host communities. It is seen as the optimum process because it enables migrants' independence and is a pre-requisite for equality and equity in society. Integration is a long process, pre-supposing the active co-operation of state administration bodies, local government, and the civil society, as well as migrants and refugees themselves.

Language knowledge and employment are key to initial integration into a new society - including migrants and refugees in education directly contributes to building their knowledge and skills, making the integration process easier for them. By finding employment migrants and refugees exit the social welfare system and become contributing members of a successful, modern, and inclusive society. Finding a job is a key priority to participating in the economic and social life of recipient countries and ensures access to adequate accommodation and living conditions as well as economic involvement. Enabling skills valuation and recognition of qualifications is crucial to ensuring that the skills of individuals are used fully.

The following is a short overview of essential suggestions for each of the relevant stakeholders.

<u>EDUCATION SECTOR</u>	
Local and Regional Government Bodies	<p>should monitor and offer possibilities/incentives for continuous teacher training</p> <p>should monitor and offer possibilities/incentives for cultural exchange workshops in which employees of organisation can learn about and accept each other's cultures</p>
National Government Bodies	<p>should ensure the ease of access to education for migrants by requiring and relying on new methods for assessing migrants' skills, not related to the local context or fluency in the local language</p> <p>should monitor the quality of educational programmes for migrants</p>
Education Providers	<p>should ensure and support further teacher training for their employees related to adapting content and methods for migrant students</p> <p>should provide language courses adapted to migrants' needs, that increase learner motivation and autonomy, and contain real-life, relevant activities</p> <p>should set realistic and flexible proficiency levels for their language courses that correspond to migrants' needs (e.g., requiring an A2 level for speaking, but A1 for writing instead of a uniform A2 level course)</p>

	<p>should separate vocational and general language training, offering vocational language courses for skilled non-native speakers</p> <p>should regularly conduct quality assurance of their courses for migrants</p>
Employers	<p>should offer/organise cultural exchange workshops so employees can learn about and accept each other's cultures</p>
The European Commission	<p>should fund international projects that develop the desired trainer profile and enable the exchange of good practices among teachers of migrants</p> <p>should promote and/or fund free/equal education for migrants</p> <p>should fund activities that promote diversity as a positive value</p> <p>should provide and/or fund the creation of a handbook or guide on teaching flexible language knowledge that correspond to migrants' needs (e.g., requiring an A2 level for speaking, but A1 for writing instead of a uniform A2 level course)</p> <p>should encourage plurilingualism and show that migrant native languages are valued and accepted, ensuring their transfer to the next generations</p>

<u>EMPLOYMENT SECTOR</u>	
Local and Regional Government Bodies	<p>should educate employers on benefits of employing migrants</p> <p>should give incentives to employers for hiring migrants</p> <p>should develop new methods of verifying migrants' knowledge and skills that don't rely only on the local language</p>
National Government Bodies	<p>should establish and monitor the implementation anti-discrimination policies in the workplace</p> <p>should analyse, recognise, and disseminate benefits of employed migrants</p> <p>organise job fairs for migrants where migrants can meet possible future employers and employers can network</p> <p>should systemise and accelerate retraining of migrants</p>
Employers	<p>should organise trainings for employers about the inclusion of migrants in the workplace</p>

	should implement new methods of verifying migrants' knowledge and skills that don't rely only on the local language
The European Commission	should develop projects and programmes that provide financial incentives for employers that hire migrants and encourage international cooperation

<u>HEALTHCARE SECTOR</u>	
Local and Regional Government Bodies	should conduct an analysis of the sector to see what needs for staff migrants can meet and what benefits migrant staff can provide
National Government Bodies	should make the sector more permeable and accessible to (skilled) migrants should encourage employers to provide additional/further training for migrant staff in the workplace
Employers	should organise intercultural training workshops for their employees should organise and invest in continuous further education of their migrant staff should employ skilled migrants that have relevant vocational language knowledge at an A2/B1 level, not requiring advanced mastery of the local language
The European Commission	should promote diversity and solidarity as positive values in various international projects and programmes