



IO4: MMM Guided reflection and recommendations for employers

**MMM – MIGRANT
MENTORSHIP MODEL**

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INTRODUCTION

There are without a doubt, several challenges in respect to integration of migrants in the labour market and those challenges deepen when talking about integration into concrete working positions within organisations.

Clearly, no set of guidelines will be able to completely fill the gap in knowledge about how migrant workers are integrated successfully into the workplace. The latter means that there is no universal approach that could have the same success in each of the respected consortium countries, facing the challenges of incoming persons from outside EU. Issues are complex in terms of the social, cultural, educational, motivational factors of different migrant groups, and in terms of systems that serve as bridges into the workplace and the community. Second to that, **EU countries approaches and policies** towards migrants in the workplace differ from country to country.¹

The mainly qualitative research, done in this document, summarizes concrete documents, relevant terminology and good practices/personal success stories of integration processes in different EU countries. Based upon the latter, the recommendations for employers are developed on a general level and can be adapted according to possibilities and existing national systems (social, educational, employment wise...).

¹ This document summarizes some common practices, policies and successful stories of integration into the labour market and working environment on the EU level.

1. RECENT FINDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Effective labour market policies inclusive of labour migration issues are complex and require reliable quantitative and qualitative data. The statistical data is needed, not only for informing policy debates at the national, regional and international levels, but also for formulating, implementing and evaluating labour migration policies which address the real effects of migration on labour markets and national development. On the long run, these data will measure what works and what not, meaning the integration policies could become more efficient, closer to personal needs and demands of the labour market.

According to Amnesty International a “Migrant” is considered a person staying outside his/her country of origin, who is not asylum-seeker or refugee (AI, 2018). Within respect to the latter, the last two formulations however are to be respected as well, since the arrival to host country and its reasons are also a major factor when tackling the issue of successful integration, and more specifically integration into the labour market. On EU level, there is a distinction between a refugee and a person with the subsidiary protection status (Skills2Work, 2018).²

The statistical data on labour market inclusion is strongly connected with different aspects of migration. Speaking in terms of distribution of asylum seekers, the latter shows interesting figures. The refuge wave is concentrated only in few countries. Whilst EU, Italy, Greece and Hungary are faced with the “front line” experience, the desired destinations are Germany, Austria and Sweden. Southern European countries have (looking at it comparatively) low number of asylum applications in general (Konle – Seidl, Bolits, 2016).

Key domains (language, housing, psychosocial support) of successful integration however are a priority to shorten the time to access the labour market. The recommended policies all point out early acquisition of language skills, quality counselling services³ for a tailor made and individualised integration plan including all possibilities of (formal) recognition of skills, credentials and other obtained prior to migrants (asylum seekers and/or refugees) arriving to a foreign (hosting) country. Language however is the first step towards any kind of future steps and services offers (Konle – Seidl, Bolits, 2016). On the other hand, early labour market integration is vital for speeding up the integration process for asylum seekers and refugees (ibidem, 2016).

² The same issue is tackled within a study of International organisation for migration as integration processes and their nature differ in terms of gaining »working status« and statistics – data available for Slovenia.

³ The IO2 – curriculum already includes this topic where an innovative aspect is contained therein – meeting the needs of a learner in an educational setting, getting to know how to recognize and deal with post-traumatic stress, among other.

2. EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES

Examples of good practices throughout the Europe are many. Countries with long-standing migrant experience show some great results (Konle – Seidl, Bolits 2016):

- Streamed language training for humanitarian migrants in Norway (a track that corresponds the host country's previous language level, enables fast progression, overall assessment of previous knowledge is used).
- Pilot on early intervention in Germany (Public employment services and their staff contact directly the reception facilities for assessment of competencies among asylum seekers).
- UK trains former refugees to operate as mentors, the so-called link officers.
- Slovenia and Portugal have developed the so called “one-stop shops” as an example of a coordinated infrastructure for integration in Eastern and Southern EU Member States (in Slovenia these are Info point for foreigners and in Portugal National Immigrant Support Centres).

Successful integration stories can be measured by so many means. Whilst numbers reveal one thing, personal stories, aspirations and expectations reveal so much more. Concrete examples are therefore welcome to provide valuable insights of first steps.

Gathered examples for Italy, Slovenia, can be found here for example: <http://www.fromskills2work.eu/Success-Stories>

Concrete local stories about possibilities of successful integration within the scope of MMM project work are listed below.

2.1. SLOVENIA

Within the project activities, concrete experience in a working environment has been carefully planned for several months. The planned number of orientation workshops, presentations and other activities have been prepared in alliance with the developed Intellectual outputs of the MMM project and moreover, testing phase and training within each Intellectual output. All activities took place at OZARA d.o.o. premises with cooperation of hosting professional staff and mentors from OZARA d.o.o., project staff from AZM LU, hosting migrants and migrant mentors. In the average 14 participants were present at the organized workshops held at OZARA d.o.o. premises. **Before we started, we also met with future participants and provided them basic information about the company and the services we provide.**

General conclusions after finishing the activities are reflecting the importance of language support and translation was needed to successfully accomplish all planned tasks. However, a great level of motivation from all sides made it possible to go beyond language barriers for achieving the greatest impact of all activities.

In the 1st session we have presented our premises, activities of our organisation, basic working operations and the necessary or so-called working language for the latter. Safety regulation and rules have been introduced as a prerequisite for all future activities within our premises. The presentation was done from OZARA d.o.o. staff and participants got to know all crucial information about our organisation: type of work, programmes, production facilities and premises at our headquarters, sessions for any questions on how the work runs every day. They got to know basic production of semi-products (work with cardboard, types of materials and their compilation, team work and cooperation, expected results in terms of what kind of norms in terms of average daily workload is evident in the host organisation, quick test of basic tasks and operation procedures). Our mentors and team welcomed the participants and the climate and communication were very fruitful in all directions: between the staff and participants, migrant mentors, mentors and employees of OZARA d.o.o. The participants were communicating actively in both languages: Slovene and English, with a bit of help of a migrant mentor, who constantly took care that clear information was delivered to all participant and all sides. The 1st visit was positive for all sides: participants were curious and asking question about procedures, material, type of activities, duration of a working week, the needed skills to be able to perform the activities, employment conditions etc. Our mentors were excited to see that a great cooperation developed between all and that teamwork, sense of duty and responsibility was an important issue for all the participants. All participants showed a great sense of self-initiative. The best feature according to partner staff and mentors was the real time experience of production and getting to know the project partner staff which helped them towards inclusion in few moments spent together.

In the 2nd session, participants got acquainted with our sewing workshop. Our mentor prepared all the necessary materials that were presented to participants. The session was constellated in the spirit of the oncoming holiday season and the preparation of decorative objects (gifts, more particularly decoration elements). Again, the participants got the chance to cooperate with staff from our organisation so that in the end the possibility to work in a multicultural environment was enabled as well. The work atmosphere was creative and pleasant. The participants represented a homogenous group and showed an interesting support system for different work procedures altogether. The participants were acquainted with several items from the assortment on which the sewing workshop was working on for the upcoming holidays. Each item was presented in terms of:

- Necessary material
- How to handle with material and instruments for production

- Several stages that lead to final production of the items

Hosting mentors have foreseen enough time to explain **several stages of crafting** and helped the participants to master each stage carefully, taking care also for necessary translations and feedback to check if the procedures are understood. The participants have managed to finish all tasks for finalisation of the products. Our staff has recognised a great potential, talent and knowledge from many of the participants that could easily accomplish other tasks with a higher level of difficulty. Creativity was the major point of this activity and was combined with insights for possibilities to develop and / or enhance one own's handcrafting skills and knowledge.

In the 3rd session, the participants visited our carpentry unit. Our staff explained and presented basic working procedures in the carpentry unit as well as the necessary equipment, different machines and safety regulations. The participants were acquainted with procedures on format saw, grinding on a belt grinding machine, cutting chip board, composing elements from massive wood boards (wooden pallets). This session was accompanied by help of migrant mentors even more intense, since the working procedures here are quite complex. Within the latter, the participants got insights into different wooden materials and wooden composite material that are used on a regular basis and all the possibilities of further development and production of final products with these materials. Although the working language within this session was quite complex, the help of migrant mentors encompassed an active session with questions and answers to the given topic – it was noticed, that most participants were intrigued by this session to the level, where concrete conversations arose. The complexity of the working procedures motivated the participants towards concrete questions also in terms of skills, knowledge and competencies needed to start a similar working position and the necessary level of knowledge and / **or qualifications** for this profession. Again, the level of motivation and genuine interest was obvious within this activity from all sides.

The last, 4th session, was organised as **a facilitated (conversational) process in a form of a group workshop**. With the help of our mentor the participants reflected upon several points of their experience in the working environment. **Main points, addressed within this workshop were:**

- Expectations and how these have been met throughout duration of their experience.
- The (personal) turning point, highlights of the experience, questions.
- Combating obstacles, aspirations for the future and constellating future employment success stories and reflection on necessary future (personal) steps to be taken.

It is without a doubt, that the last session was helpful and motivating for both sides – employers' professional staff and participants. As for a hosting organisation the feedback of such activities is always welcome and necessary. The participants showed genuine satisfaction with:

- Activities provided
- Help offered throughout their experience

The desired future in terms of employment, independent **living** and inclusion in the local environment has been a major topic within this workshop. Some of the mentees were motivated to explore options of employment within our facilities, possibilities to gain necessary education for working in the scope of our working field. Our mentor facilitated a creative part of the so structured workshop **towards a creative and participative creation of personal plans**, ideas and wishes for personal (employment) future. Participants have revealed their professional interests in the future like becoming a teacher, a cook working on a tourist farm, electrician, barman, banker, fisherman, car mechanic, welder... The workshop ended in a positive atmosphere, best wishes and concrete personal outline for the coming employment steps.

Conclusions and observations

Within the time of all activities that took place at OZARA d.o.o., our professional staff and mentors have observed several aspects of inclusion. In terms of language barriers, it was noticed, that participants and migrant mentors got more and more involved not only in the basic communication, but even more in the technical **(conversation in terms of professional language)** part of it. Within the latter great progress was observed as the language skills have been supported with experience in the real working environment where one could match **the existing (previous) knowledge** with concrete experience **which is a great combination**, because face to face interaction combined with practical experience really boosts the language comprehension and is a great factor of progressing forward with language comprehension. The role of migrant mentors and professional staff can be seen as a catalyst for fostering communication as migrant mentors were the 1st reference point when going deeper into the working procedures – as these mentors cooperated with the hosting professional staff, the results included an intercultural experience as well. There was only one critical point of the experience, for which we can say it improved till the last session – it was the comprehension of on-time appearance on the sessions. The latter is an important aspect of the working life, alongside with understanding that procedures and planning is an important part of everyday working life.

2.2. ITALY

Each national experience is going to be a unique example – the main emphasis is to collect information, valuable for employers of the target group in each of our countries.

During the last month of the training, **four** workshops have been organized in order to test the knowledges acquired by learners concerning literacy, numeracy. ICT and social skills.

Before the beginning of the workshops we organized a presentation during which the professionals in charge to run the activities explained what the participants would learn and what the outcome for the closing event would be.

At the end of the presentation, the 14 learners decided which workshop they want to attend.

Some key issues about the workshops:

- The experience gained during the training has shown us that learners learn better when they can see that what they are learning will bring to a tangible outcome. For these reasons, we finalized all the workshops to produce something to be used or needed for the closing ceremony of the project's training activities, **scheduled for October 26th, 2018.**
- Before the beginning of the workshops, we provided 2 hours training about health and safety at work, explaining learners the risks connected with the use of electricity, ovens (for cooking or for ceramic), varnishes etc. It was important, to our opinion, for participants to understand that in Italy there is a very strict legislation about H&S training, that is compulsory for all workers. Moreover, we often realized that our learners used electrical appliances and other equipment without considering the potential risks to use, for instance, plugs not perfectly inserted into the socket or to leave electric cables dangling also when children were around.
- The workshops were managed by experienced professionals assisted by the migrant mentors. The staff of Eurocultura was present for a few hours every day in order to verify the progress of the activity, the behaviour of the learners and, above all, to gather the feedbacks of the professionals and the migrant mentors.

Sewing workshop

The final aim of the project was to reproduce the logo of the MMM project on cloth and to sew it on the T-shirts that all the learners would wear during the closing ceremony. Learners have also to calculate how much cloth of different colours was needed and how much it would cost, therefore applying the numeracy skills acquired during the training.

Almost all the learners had basic knowledge of hand sewing, while none knew how to use the sewing machine and then, after a first phase during which the actual ability to

sew by hand of the participants was tested, the professional seamstress was focused on teaching machine sewing.

Many of the learners have decided, after the end of the activities of the MMM project, to follow the sewing courses offered by the association "Open Space" to learn how to sew their clothes and those of their children. Some learners have also stated that, should their asylum application not be accepted, and they should therefore return to their country, they would start their business as a seamstress.

The presence of migrant mentors was vital to help learners understand what was explained by the seamstress. Furthermore, the migrant mentors wrote on flip charts hanged on walls the sectorial terms, often accompanied by a drawing so that the learners could fix in the memory the specific words of tailoring.

The practical application of the sectorial terminology together with the visual representation of the terms meant that the learners quickly acquired the knowledge and mastery of a very high number of words, with significant linguistic performances. Having seen how well this methodology work, it has been used in all workshops.

Ceramics workshop: Final aim of this workshop was to create ceramic placemats that would be donated to the guests on the day of the closing ceremony. The workshop was led by an expert ceramist supported by migrant mentors.

At the beginning of the workshop learners **had to** calculate how much clay and paint was needed to make the placeholders and how much the total cost would have been. The learners have worked hard, showing interest and enthusiasm, as well as great dexterity. Language learning has also improved considerably. Learning vocabulary, idioms and linguistic expressions was much easier for our type of learners during the workshop than during the in-class training.

The need to communicate with the ceramist to understand explanations or ask for clarification in order to carry out their work clearly busted the learning process.

Cooking workshop: Final aim of the workshop was to decide the menu for the closing ceremony meal, cooking dishes that belonged to the culture of origin of learners, migrant mentors and Eurocultura trainers.

The learners looked for recipes on the Internet, keeping in mind the available budget. They calculated the quantities of the different ingredients they needed to prepare the meal for 30 people and the total cost. It was a wonderful opportunity to use all the skills acquired during the training course.

It was particularly interesting to see how the learners, in choosing the recipes, took into consideration the different eating habits of the participants. They therefore avoided pork, coming from the Islamic religion, overly spicy foods and the use of meat that does not fit into common use in some countries, thus showing they have gained a certain degree of cultural awareness.

During the closing ceremony, the workshop participants, helped by the migrant mentors and Eurocultura trainers, cooked the meal for 30 people, working collaboratively, in full compliance with the hygiene rules of food handling that had been explained to the beginning of the workshop.

Waitress workshop: The final aim of the workshop was to give the learners the basic skills, and the knowledge of professional terminology, to serve at the table during the meal at the closing ceremony of the project.

The learners learned how to properly set the table **as in a restaurant**, the purpose of different types of glass, plate and cutlery, to prepare the decorations and how to serve food and drinks to the guests during the meal.

Although finding difficult to understand the motivation to use many different dishes, glasses and cutlery, the learners worked with enthusiasm and during the final ceremony they performed a very accurate service, with great satisfaction of all the participants.

Conclusions and observations

During the workshop the learners kept a polite behaviour, based on collaboration and respect for the rules of execution and behaviour that were given by the workshop professionals.

The critical points were the respect for the start time, the chatter even during the explanations of the dressmaker and the tone of the voice, too high compared to the standards of northern Italy.

However, these negative behaviours have diminished thanks to the perseverance of the mentors and trainers of Eurocultura in recommending respect for schedules, avoiding chat and speaking in a low voice.

We can say they improved a lot their way of acting, having understood the importance of respecting the rules of behaviour of the host country as a fundamental element of mutual respect and civic coexistence.

It was confirmed that theoretical concepts are more easily learned and memorized when they have an immediate practical application. This is whether it is language learning, numeracy, IT and social behaviour.

For learners with a very low educational background it is important to help them to assimilate concepts, learn procedures and rules using, in addition to words, graphic representations.

The mentors' support played a very important role in the good results of the workshops as they helped the learners to overcome the difficulties by offering them further explanations when they had not fully understood the indications given by the professionals.

2.3. GERMANY

Each national experience **was a** unique example – the main emphasis **was** to collect information, valuable for employers of the target group in each of our countries.

For this project INIBIA EEIG cooperates with a small vocational school, which cares for disadvantaged young people, but especially also for refugees and migrants (approx. 200). Long before the MMM project, the "Werkstatt-Berufskolleg" in Unna had expressed its great interest in preparing the many migrants in peer groups for life in Germany, which could not be sufficiently guaranteed in "normal lessons" alone, by means of trained mentors.

After the mentors had been trained by INIBIA EEIG, the phase of the mentors' work began, accompanied by their trainers. This took place in the "Werkstatt-Berufskolleg" after the official lessons, both in classrooms (theory) and in the workshops (practice). The working conditions were very good both in terms of technical and practical equipment and in terms of working conditions in the school.

Since the migrants knew the working conditions on site, we didn't have to go into the rules and safety regulations of the school anymore and were able to join the workshops immediately.

INIBIA has conducted trainings (from 10.10.2018 - 22.12.2018) in all areas of competence: In Literacy, Numeracy, ICT and Social Competences. From November onwards, the mentees applied their knowledge both in "normal lessons" and in practice in the workshops (kitchen, service area, metal workshop, care field, as well as the workshop for economy and administration and the student's company).

The workshops are run by professionals from the business world: metal masters, production masters, cooks, caregivers. The working conditions in these workshops were roughly the same as in a company the size of a medium-sized, standard craft company: punctuality, cleanliness, speed, high performance pressure, tight time windows, real customers (e.g. in the production of buffets, dinners, chefs who also get louder), etc.

The accompanying support by mentors and trainers/trainers/teachers (in the background) helped to solve language problems in stressful and difficult situations.

The simultaneous combination of theory and practice at the end of this phase proved to be a stroke of luck in this learning process. Thus, the mentees made following statements e.g. during the evaluation of this first run:

- "In the kitchen we see our activity, at the same time we smell, taste and hear how lunch is made. That's why we learn German words much faster."
- "We learned in the student company how to receive, sort and store items, communicate and record the inventory of goods online. That was only possible as a team and with mutual support."

For example: In connection with their work in the kitchen and service area, the mentees had to select cooking recipes from the internet, understand them, go shopping independently and plan the quantities of food they had to buy. Such and other tasks and activities linked the four different areas of competence: literacy, ICT, numeracy and social competencies. In particular, social competence in combination with cultural competence was extremely well trained: They no longer walk through the

pedestrian zone in noisy and gesticulating groups, no longer go to the supermarket shelves in unmanageable groups and unsettle other customers, etc.

This example can also be applied to the work in the student company, metal workshop and workshop for economy and administration.

The MMM project helps to prepare the mentees even better for their first exams in June of each year. This can lead to them staying in school and perhaps going into training there. Other mentees go directly to craft businesses and start training there. Through the workshops and the project, they have developed so far that employers are happy to hire them despite the language difficulties.

The success of this project has led to the decision of the Werkstatt-Berufskolleg teachers' team to train the next "generation of migrant mentors". **This second round of training began in February 2019.**

Conclusions and observations

During the last 5 months of 2018, the behaviour of mentees (and also of other migrants in their school classes) changed significantly. This concerned their group behaviour, their language behaviour, the changes in their sentence formation (2-word sentences, 3-word sentences, short complete sentences with subject, predicate and object), **technical terms, the behaviour of the mentees** (and also of the other migrants in their school classes) **etc.**

Much more important were two other factors: The mentors were an important psychological factor for the mentees. Their presence in the processes helped considerably to inquire freely and without pressure in case of difficulties. This is clearly easier with a mentor than with a master or boss, who you have a lot of respect for anyway and don't always dare to ask questions.

Learning the language with hands and eyes (or nose and taste) is the fastest learning process. Holding a tool in one's hands and pronouncing one's technical name at the same time accelerates learning considerably.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

Each participating organisation in the MMM project has planned their activities for evaluation in the workplace within all organisational possibilities and standards for achieving the maximum effect of these activities. Gathered observations are presented below.

3.1. Insights from national experiences

SLOVENIA

All activities in OZARA d.o.o. have been carefully planned in order to achieve the highest possible effect for all sides. The professional staff has gathered all vital information from observation, level of motivation and self-initiative, general interest and understanding of working procedures. From the gathered information and feedback (on site and after the activity has finished) it is evident, that the level of attention was high throughout each of the workshops. Language barriers have been successfully overcome with several on spot checks and cooperation between migrant mentors, our professional staff taking care that each step was explained and on-site check of understanding/feedback from migrants and project coordinator's staff as well as using English language throughout all situations where it was necessary. The communication process within all the activities was planned and conducted as an all sides process (presentation, feedback, comments, translations, asking questions, answering questions, etc.).

However, it is still obvious, that language barriers and lack of formal data on previous experience operate as a major obstacle within successful integration into the labour market. On the other hand, another possibility should be considered as a good option for integration – options for inclusion into the workplace through regular national unemployment programmes. **Integration programmes in the country where a migrant mentor would ease the process of integration into working could be positively influenced with insights from the MMM project.**

ITALY

Just as the tutor for apprentices is set up in companies, a migrant worker tutor could be a further support to facilitate the job placement of foreigners and to improve their work performance.

This tutor would have the task of ensuring that the migrant worker fully understood the indications received from the manager and possibly give supplementary explanations.

In the company it might be useful to hang pictograms to the walls to help migrant workers who do not have an excellent knowledge of the language of the host country to understand how to perform their work and which rules to follow.

GERMANY

In Germany it is not usual for employers to be advised by student representatives (in this case the migrant mentors) during internships by interns. This is organised by the counsellors or the educational guides or the social worker of the vocational school or the care organisation of the migrants.

Due to the cooperation with INIBIA EEIG, the Werkstatt-Berufskolleg has considered that the refugees and migrants can also receive a visit from the migrant mentors during their internships if required. This is intended to increase the quality of supervision by the mentoring teachers.

Furthermore, the following recommendations resulting from the first run of this project are not unimportant for the employers - The potential employer before concluding an employment contract in an internship must find out whether the language skills are sufficient for the job. For this he needs a close cooperation with the sending organisation.

Furthermore, it is necessary to maintain close contact with educational supervisors, social workers and teachers so that all the talents of a refugee/migrant can be discovered and used according to their abilities.

3.2. Common challenges within the evaluation process

The observations within the scope of evaluation in the workplace differ from country to country and no national piloting and evaluation activity is the same. The consortium was also well aware of the fact, that the national piloting was a unique experience that is yet to lead towards a final development of all parts / contents of the project results – therefore the results cannot be gathered in terms of a common matrix to work upon.

Some common aspects however can be tracked down within evaluation phase and have occurred in different perspectives in the participating consortium countries:

- The problem of (working) language comprehension and communications skills in general.
- Intercultural differences (a variety of manifestation: from understanding of efficient time planning, on – time appearance, concentration, engagement, understanding the importance of such activity within integration programme).

3.3. Towards a successful integration into the labour market

With respect to labour market integration, it is important to mention that no unified approach could be tracked down in any of the participating countries. Examples and possible approaches towards inclusion in the labour market are therefore listed in combination with useful resources, that address this issue from perspectives of different integration projects/recommendations/information that support the findings of the work done in the consortium partners.

The approach, upon which the project partners worked on, also includes and highlights some of the national circumstances in work related activities (i.e. the waitressing and cooking part, internship assistance and other – all of which are binding parts of the national employment and work-oriented education policies from the participating countries).

The consortium has found some valuable information also from some major employment agencies, national projects on this topic and other resources with the aim of combining existing introspective with the results of the project activities (piloting and evaluation in the workplace).

On the European level, several steps have already been taken to address the challenge of integration:

- Commission Action Plan on Integration
- New Skills Agenda for Europe
- Revised Common European Asylum System

The most concerning fact is the integration of newly arrived refugees. They represent the group, which is due to different traumas, missing formal documentation on qualifications, language and cultural barriers, the most vulnerable and is at risk on carrying the highest burden taking on the risk of stigmatisation in educational field and labour market inclusion. The “New skills Agenda” also informs of importance that an inclusive society can only be built upon strengthening human capital in general – being all inclusive and not in favour of any group of persons at risk of exclusion (EC, 2016, p.4). Different integrational programmes should be built much wider and not focusing only on language and labour market integration but also building on comprehending European values and living in a diverse modern society (ibidem p. 5).

The New Skills Agenda for Europe specifically addresses the question of integration into the labour market where several steps are planned for promotion of upskilling of the low-skilled and low-qualified persons that could be beneficial to third country nationals as well (EC, 2016, p.8):

- on-line language assessment and learning for newly arrived
- peer learning and welcoming classes
- early childhood education and upskilling

Overall, the rates of unemployment among third - country nationals are high due to under or over qualification on one hand, **and these employees are also** working in less favourable conditions. The top priority to address is therefore to facilitate all processes within validation of skills, recognizing qualifications which is even more important for refugees who often lack concrete documents and evidence of prior learning and gained qualifications. Within this scope active labour market policies are seen as a crucial point to invest in. The duration of obtaining a work permit or formal access to labour market is set down to 9 months as obligatory, but in many countries, this can happen earlier (i.e. Belgium, Italy, Romania (EC, 2016, p.9). Early integration into vocational education with strong orientation towards work-based learning could be seen particularly effective especially to third country nationals (obtaining or gaining higher level of qualification (ibidem, p.9)

One of the largest temporarily staffing firm in the world has already published the so-called white paper on the labour market integration of refugees. The document points out one very important issue of current labour market demand and supply balance – namely the question of skilled and qualified labour force shortage in general. Lack of language skills and **missing information about previous education** are also considered as a main obstacle for a quick and successful integration into the labour market. When addressing the employers, this white paper exposes the fact of each organisation finding its own way for concrete actions. Several interviews with companies have been done to address this issue; afterwards 10 recommendations were prepared to support of the employment integration (Adecco, 2017). In a condensed point of view, these are among others (ibid. p.64 - 78):

- top down approach (top management prepares a framework, communicated to lower level of management and **departments** – tackling issues of support and inclusion)
- Maximising opportunities to speak in national language
- Up-skilling of the staff in terms of inclusion issues
- Strengthening cooperation with external actors (employment organisations, ngo's, initiatives, etc.) – networking
- Transparency in competencies (gained, acquired, acknowledged) – internship, assessment, orientation programmes
- Including all perspectives and communication in the employment process (both sides understanding)
- Investment into manageable and sustainable programmes for integration

What specifically tangled our focus was the fact of “going the extra mile” meaning that integration policies do include to take a couple of extra steps towards successful integration. Usually, it takes year for a person to be fully integrated in the workplace in general (Adecco, 2017).

Based on practical findings in the project we observe the following issues to be the most important when talking about concrete steps for organisations to integrate migrants into the working place:

- Engagement of relevant stakeholders (local, regional) for obtaining information about available labour force that could match the organisational needs and leaving open options on integrating a person with a work permit only.
- Searching for options and available / funded programmes for employment of the most vulnerable groups (probation periods, internships, programmes for short working experiences that can lead to a long-term employment).
- Searching for opportunities on professional /HR development programmes, offered by different public/private actors on inclusion policies and approaches.

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