



CBMM Project

Capacity Building of Institutions Involved
in Migration Management and Reintegration
of Returnees in the Republic of Serbia

International Organization for Migration

TOOLKIT FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION IN SERBIA



The project is funded by the European Union through the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia



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Publisher:

**International Organization for Migration – Mission to Serbia
The Project “Capacity Building of Institutions Involved in Migration Management and Reintegration of Returnees in the Republic of Serbia“(CBMM)**

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Printed by:

Dosije Studio, Belgrade

Number of copies:

100

ISBN 978-86-85003-12-7

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The publishing of this document was done with the support of the EU. The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the positions of the EU.

Foreword

Immigration integration is a challenge for all countries, but experience from advanced economies in Europe, North America and elsewhere demonstrates that immigrants create opportunities both for themselves and for most members of the communities in which they settle. However, they can only do so if they are given the tools and opportunities to integrate.

While the Republic of Serbia currently hosts only small numbers of immigrants, most of whom live in Belgrade, it is likely that more will seek to live and work throughout Serbia as its economy grows and expands.

Already today, legal immigrants to Serbia – whether they be temporary or permanent – are entitled to the same rights as citizens: to earn a living, to receive an education and social services, to safety and security.

But the central challenge of integrating immigrants revolves around creating mechanisms for addressing their unique needs. This does not necessarily require creating new infrastructures and services for immigrants, but rather, creating sensitivity and policies within existing systems. A small investment in addressing immigrant needs can have a major payoff – rather than presenting a burden on the state, immigrants will be able to maximize their contributions to Serbia's labor market and economy.

This Immigrant's Integration Toolkit is designed as a source of policy and project ideas for policy-makers and practitioners seeking effective means to weave newcomers into the fabric of Serbian society. The guide blends theoretical and practical aspects of integration. It presents a variety of policy tools developed in Israel and other countries facing substantial immigration and integration challenges, and proposes ways of adjusting such best practices to the specific Serbian context.

This toolkit focuses on critical areas of integration – education, language, employment and institutional mechanisms for integration programming. It also devotes a chapter to best practices in addressing racial, ethnic and economic diversity and countering xenophobia. (see chapter 3: cultural competence)

Despite being divided into distinct components, each of which can be used individually, this toolkit is also a sum of its parts. They are intertwined and mutually dependent, requiring coordination among them in order to arrive at coherent policy guidelines and to carry them out in an effective manner.

The handbook is based on the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy of the European Union, which regards integration as “a dynamic, long-term, and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation”. In the EU’s view, integration provides rights and imposes obligations on newcomers and residents, alike. Newcomers are tasked with making efforts to adapt to their new country of residence and become productive members of their community; the native-born residents are responsible for creating the economic, social and cultural opportunities which migrants need in order to succeed.

This notion of integration emphasizes respect for differences and an appreciation of diversity, along with an understanding that only a combination of separate elements can create a harmonious whole.

Successful integration therefore requires the participation of all stakeholders. It must encompass national and local government, the business sector, labor unions, faith-based institutions, schools, health and welfare providers, ethnic organizations which can bridge the gap between immigrant and local culture.

Eliminating language barriers and providing opportunities to develop language proficiency are essential for successful integration. Acquisition of language leads to a higher standard of living as newcomers gain access to education and job training opportunities, as well as community services and institutions. Health care, employment, and other services that promote economic mobility are also essential for helping migrants establish a foothold and contribute fully to society.

If immigrants are to be allowed to participate fully within the host society, they must be treated equally and fairly and be protected from discrimination on all fronts. Exploitation in the workplace and

limited access to services undermine migrants' ability to realize their potential. Unequal treatment has been proven a prime factor in the marginalization of migrants, with its attendant economic and social implications for future generations.

Integration benefits not only the migrants, but society as a whole. It holds out the promise of secure, vibrant, and cohesive communities and an enriched social, economic and civic life. It helps build a strong democracy shaped by different experiences, histories and backgrounds, granting equal opportunity and able to meet wide-ranging needs. It enables the revitalization of declining communities, increased productivity and an expanded base of workers, consumers and taxpayers. It enhances countries' global competitiveness through a multi-lingual, multi-cultural workforce.

The development of an effective integration policy has become an important priority of the European Union's migration and asylum policy. The handbook draws a roadmap to help the Republic of Serbia attain this goal.

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Abbreviations

- CBI – *Content-Based Instruction*
- CEFR – *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*
- EU – *European Union*
- GFMD – *Global Forum for Media Development*
- HTAs – *Hometown Associations*
- ICT – *Information and Communications Tehnology*
- IT – *Information Tehnology*
- JDC – *Joint Distribution Committee*
- NES – *Nacionalna služba za zapošljavanje*
- OSCE – *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe*
- OECD – *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development*
- PISA – *Programme for International Student Assessment*
- UNESCO – *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*

Introduction

The Republic of Serbia has faced numerous challenges during its first two decades of independence, including a large-scale influx of refugees and displaced persons.

The Commissariat for Refugees, established in 1992, has had to contend with over 500,000 refugees who poured into Serbia following the dissolution of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It was subsequently tasked with providing support for over 200,000 people, mostly Serbs, dislocated from their homes in the disputed territory of Kosovo/UNSCR 1244.

Despite the passage of time, at least 270,000 people still hold refugee or IDP status, making Serbia the only European country with a protracted refugee problem. Moreover, more than 200,000 former refugees who have formally integrated into Serbia by obtaining citizenship, have still to resolve problems of housing and employment.

Serbian authorities possess considerable experience in providing social support services, comprising a large part of any integration portfolio, to these forced migrants whose needs have largely been of a humanitarian nature. The strategies adopted in recent years for dealing with the refugees and internally displaced have focused, too, on more sustainable solutions, including improvement of living conditions and access to services.

But with its candidacy for membership in the European Union, Serbia must also address the integration of other migrant groups as well. It has expressed its commitment to promoting an integration policy aimed at making the rights and obligations of foreign residents comparable to those of its own citizens. This commitment is articulated in the framework of the EU-Serbia Stabilization and Association Agreement, which grants foreign citizens residing legally in the country comparable rights to those of citizens.

But Serbia has yet to develop a coordinated and integrated migration policy. At the institutional level, no designated agency has been

tasked with developing a coherent approach to the integration of foreigners, nor is there an effective program developed at the state and local level which would offer a comprehensive package of language courses, legal counseling, services and naturalization.

Currently the number of foreign nationals residing legally in Serbia is about 0.3% of the population. This group is comprised of a variety of nationalities, from countries as disparate as China and Libya, Afghanistan and Ukraine, with little in common except residence in this central European country. Even though the country does not have large immigrant communities, this situation is likely to change in the years to come. Therefore the development of EU-compatible migrant integration policies will have practical relevance.

EU Regulation 862/2007 defines immigration as the “action by which a person establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of a Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having previously been usually resident in another Member State or a third country” (outside the EU).

While Serbian law does not currently recognize the category of immigrants, it does grant temporary or permanent residence to foreign nationals, and provides a citizenship option, considered an advanced level of foreigners’ integration into the receiving community. In 2010, more than 24,000 people acquired citizenship of the Republic of Serbia. Most (92%) were citizens of former Yugoslav republics; 6% were not Europeans – about half of whom were Chinese.

Thus far, Serbia has served primarily as a transit destination for foreign nationals passing through on their way to its more developed EU neighbors. Foreigners are granted legal status for the purposes of employment, family unification, study, asylum and other reasons. But among a population of 7.2 million, the foreign residence permit holders number less than 22,000, according to Ministry of Interior figures for 2010. About 30% of the permits are permanent ones.

Most permit holders are from China, Romania, Macedonia, Russia and Ukraine. Except for Romanian citizens, the number of other migrant groups registered a decline in 2010 compared to 2009.

The largest group of foreign permit holders are Chinese, who run a thriving market for Chinese goods in Belgrade and other businesses in the capital and in the second largest Serbian city, Novi Sad.

While Chinese permit holders are mostly male, those from Romania, Russia and Ukraine were predominantly women who married Serbian

nationals. Minors accounted for 5.8% of permit holders. The majority of foreign nationals (some 70%) reside in Belgrade.

Major migrant groups in Serbia, by citizenship and gender

Citizenship	2009		2010	
	Total	Women (%)	Total	Women (%)
China	4,866	45.4	4,688	44.8
Romania	3,132	90.1	3,257	90
Macedonia	1,985	65	1,853	63.8
Russian Federation	1,596	83.3	1,290	88.3
Ukraine	1,055	89.2	975	90.2

Source: Ministry of Interior

According to the Law on Foreigners, temporary residence may be permitted for up to one year, and extended in accordance with the law, for the purposes of work, schooling and family reunification. Foreigners may also be granted temporary residence if they have sufficient financial means to sustain themselves and their reasons for temporary residence are justified.

In 2010, temporary residence permits were issued to 6,325 foreigners, most of them from EU countries, followed by Asia, European countries outside the EU and former Yugoslav republics which are not EU members. Three countries with the highest recorded share in this group were China (16%), the Russian Federation (10.9%) and Libya (9.4%).

The most common ground for issuing temporary residence permits in 2009 and 2010 was family reunification, followed by work, while education was significantly less represented

Comparative data on temporary residence permits issued for the first time on the basis of work indicate slight changes between 2009 and 2010: the share of Chinese citizens increased, while that of EU citizens declined slightly.

The number of temporary residence permits issued for the first time in 2010 on the basis of family reunification registered a slight increase. A significant increase in this category of persons was recorded among citizens of China and Libya.

According to data from the Ministry of Interior, a total of 6,750 foreigners were permanently residing in Serbia in 2010, predominantly citizens from Romania, Russia, Macedonia and Ukraine.

The Law on Foreigners provides for permanent residence to a person:

- 1) Who has stayed in Serbia without interruption for at least five years on a temporary residence permit before applying for permanent residence;
- 2) Who has been married for at least three years to a citizen of the Republic of Serbia or to a foreigner with permanent residence status..

A person granted permanent residence is entitled to work, free education and vocational training, social assistance, health and social insurance, freedom of association, membership in organizations representing the interests of workers or employers.

Overall, the number of official work permits has been growing, although their total is still modest. The National Employment Service issued 2,576 work permits to foreigners in 2010, compared to 1,700 in 2006. However, it is estimated that the number of foreigners working in the Republic of Serbia is greater than the number of permits issued.

Work permits were mostly issued to skilled professionals in offices of foreign firms and to construction workers. Most recipients were men (76.3%). Analyzed by age, the largest share of work permit holders were aged 31-40, followed by persons under the age of 30 (26.6%) and those aged 41-50 (23.3%). Chinese citizens were the largest group, followed by Macedonians, citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and those of the Russian Federation.

CHAPTER 1

Institutional Mechanisms for Immigrant Integration

Effective mechanisms are key for the integration of immigrants, both in helping them find their way in a new land and in helping the host country, its communities and residents adjust to life with the newcomers. They can make the difference between an alienating, nightmarish experience with an endless bureaucratic tangle and a streamlined, trust-building introduction to the future of immigrants and their children.

Government agencies providing services on a national and local level have the opportunity to ease an immigrant's way towards long-term integration. Serving immigrant populations need not entail complex mechanisms or the establishment of special services. Setting in place policies and linkages between agencies can help government adapt services as needed or direct immigrants to the needed services.

The challenge of integrating immigrants is faced by all services delivered to citizens and residents, ranging from health to employment, to housing to education. Unless addressed directly, national and local agencies may actually hinder integration.

National Level Policies and Procedures

While services are generally provided on a local level, there are certain policies and procedures that should be established on a national level that ease the establishment of integration mechanisms into services on the local level.

These include:

- **Monitoring data on the immigrant population**

The government collects data on citizens and residents of Serbia.

Data for temporary and permanent residents of Serbia should be compiled and shared with employment centers, education and health departments, as well as social welfare agencies.

- **Frameworks for language services**

Language support is a unique need for immigrants, that doesn't already exist in standard service systems. Options for types of language courses, for both adults and children are elaborated upon in a dedicated chapter. The funding mechanisms and framework preferences must be made on a national level. The absence of such decisions may mean that local governments do not establish options at all, or establish inadequate services.

- **Standardization of legal rights for immigrants**

Immigrants to Serbia are entitled to the same rights and services as all citizens. In order to prevent discrimination, national policy should direct local authorities on the appropriate ways of ensuring rights are met and that discrimination is prevented.

- **Transparency in the admission of immigrants**

Immigrants should be told what is expected from them and what they can expect. Long periods of uncertainty about future residence (and in the case of asylum seekers, dependency on government largesse) should be avoided, not least for their negative implications for the migrants concerned.

- **Consultation with immigrant representatives**

Allowing immigrants a voice in the formulation of policies that directly affect them may result in policy that better serves immigrants and enhances their sense of belonging.

Municipal Level Policies and Procedures

Since integration takes place in the areas where immigrants live, municipalities and local governments have the ultimate responsibility

for adapting their services for reaching newcomers. Their independence also gives municipalities more flexibility to meet localized needs.

Integration at the municipal level is especially important given that social segregation, social exclusion, and marginalization of immigrants can threaten the social cohesion in these cities.

The adverse implications of such marginalization continue to be seen across generations.

Administrative arrangements for delivering services often require coordination between agencies. For example, programs for immigrant job-seekers could be advertised through social welfare or health services.

This coordination can be accomplished in a variety of ways, depending on the size of the authority and the number of immigrants. In larger cities and/or those that have large numbers of immigrants, it may make sense to have a separate body within the municipality that is responsible for coordinating services. In smaller cities or those with few immigrants, it may be sufficient to assign a coordinating role within a specific department (e.g., social welfare), or make it the shared responsibility of several departments.

One Stop Centers

Such agencies, which provide a variety of essential services under one roof, have proven effective in equipping migrants with relevant information and services regarding education, health, welfare, housing. The advantage is threefold: it saves migrants the frustration of trying to access offices and services dispersed across wide areas, streamlines services and enables on-site coordination among multiple agencies and providers. Such centers can also provide interpretation for immigrants and train their staff to be culturally sensitive to migrants' needs and different cultural backgrounds. This, as opposed to training officials at a myriad of agencies and offices.

By reducing contradictory and insufficient information and enabling culturally sensitive mediation, the One-Stop-Shop plays an important role in increasing immigrants' trust in public administration services and narrowing the gap between the two.

According to the Handbook On How To Implement A One-Stop-Shop For Immigrant Integration, published in conjunction with the GFMD in 2009, while implementation of such centers requires the supervision of one umbrella ministry, agency or local authority, each ministry or agency with a branch present at the One-Stop-Shop retains its competences and does not delegate these to the umbrella organization. The staff is simply required to work at its own agency branch with the support of One-Stop-Shop cultural mediators, rather than working for a different ministry.

The Handbook recommends that the following government agencies be present at a one-stop shop:

- Immigration and Citizenship Services
- Employment Ministry and Labor Inspectorate
- Education Ministry
- Health Ministry
- Social Security
- Housing Ministry
- Voter registration
- Tax registration
- Service for language and/or citizenship tests

For countries of a relatively small geographic dimension, the solution of having one or more One-Stop-Shops in central and accessible locations may be applicable. Larger cities with high concentrations of immigrant populations are the obvious choice for locating them.

The Municipality of Brescia in northern Italy set up an Office for Integration and Citizenship. Brescia has one of the highest rates of resident foreigners in Italy (15.3%). The Office was set up with the main objective of reception and orientation of immigrants in the city. It acts as an organ of management of affairs related to immigration, supporting new arrivals in achieving socio-economic independence and in their participation in the public life of the city, developing projects for the reception of people seeking asylum, and promoting the rights and duties of citizenship. The provision of this service essentially relates to legal issues (information and legal advice); needs assessment with the support of cultural mediators and professionals in law and psychology;

administrative support in filling in forms, including residence visas; advice in the area of entrepreneurship (evaluation of available opportunities and resources, support in financial analysis and choice of business); support in looking for work or housing; and specialized support for people seeking asylum.

Each chapter of this manual offers more detailed options. Following general guidelines for making services accessible to immigrants:

- **Access to information.** The municipality should ensure that information on legal responsibilities and services reaches residents not fully fluent in Serbian. This can be done through translation of materials available at the municipality and/or on the municipal website.
- **Outreach to the community.** Immigrants often experience social isolation in their adoptive environments. Social and cultural acculturation is an important part of immigrant integration. The municipality should encourage immigrants to participate in cultural and sport events, both for children and adults. The local authority can also encourage immigrant groups to share their own cultural heritage with the veteran Serbian population by encouraging community-wide religious or cultural celebrations. Through both types of activity, immigrants and veteran residents will be exposed to one another on a personal level.

Nurturing Civil Society

Beyond the public sector, local governments should be encouraged to leverage the resources of the private and non-governmental sector. Community-based entities, such as religious groups, civil society organizations and other non-profit organizations, such as trade unions, employers' associations and the media, sports clubs can serve as an important resource for immigrants. By supporting newcomers, these organizations get an immediate return on their efforts through increased membership increasing strength for their cause. They may also influence the political climate and public opinion, serving as important agents in combating exclusion, discrimination, and xenophobia.

In a society such as Serbia, where there is still very little immigration, civil society groups may not be aware of the needs, or even of the existence of newcomers. Municipalities should reach out to these groups to raise awareness. This can be as simple as sharing brochures or fact-sheets about the potential benefits of recruiting immigrants as part of their activities. Local governments can also provide targeted lectures or workshops to civil society leadership on cultural sensitivity and the needs of immigrants. Municipalities can also offer mentoring services to individuals and groups who volunteer to support new immigrants.

Hometown Associations

When immigrant groups reach a critical mass in a new country, they often establish informal, voluntary societies for mutual support. These societies, known generally as hometown associations (HTA's), are often the most effective groups for providing social support; they are plugged into the immediate needs of their members, and help one another out of a sense of community. Surveys of HTA's around the world find that immigrants turn to them for assistance in finding housing, employment, legal advice, educational opportunities and even small loans.

Hometown associations have two main drawbacks. First, they can isolate immigrants, keeping them mostly among themselves rather than integrating among veteran residents. Second, the associations generally rely on volunteer work, and have few human or financial resources; they do not have the capacity to assist on a broader scale.

Municipalities can reach out to hometown associations, both to strengthen their capacity to provide services themselves, and to learn better how to meet the needs of immigrant groups. Such cooperation and avenues of dialogue can also create linkages for identifying and dealing with discrimination, and for promoting cultural integration through city-wide events or initiatives.

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CHAPTER 2

Employment

Immigration has contributed significantly to employment growth in the European Union: migrants contribute towards demand for goods and services, thus increasing demand for labor. Between the years 2000 and 2007, third-country migrants accounted for an employment increase of almost 3.7 million and about 25% of the overall rise in employment. Migrant labor can also decrease the costs of production and in turn reduce the costs of goods and services in a competitive market.

In countries with high unemployment rates, such as Serbia, there is always a fear that third country immigrants will compete for the already scarce job opportunities. Many policy makers, however, argue that immigration can create new opportunities for natives together with migrants. Such is the case when immigrants take jobs that complement the labor market, rather than substitute native workers (e.g., low skilled jobs), or come with skills and training that are hard to find in the host country (e.g., engineers, IT, financial services).

In the absence of a sudden surge in European birth rates, large-scale immigration may also be necessary to stave off the effects of population aging and decline. With fewer citizens of working age, an infusion of third-country migrants can help support the growing social welfare expenditures for an aging population.

Conversely, unemployment of migrant workers can increase crime as well as burden the welfare system.

Migration Challenges in Employment

In order to enjoy the potential benefits of migration and to minimize potential pitfalls, states must ensure fair access for migrants into the labor market and educational and training systems that provide them with real opportunities.

Labor market integration of an immigrant also means access to social security, including unemployment benefits or other contribution-based benefits (i.e. child-raising allowances, pension rights, etc.), especially in countries where social benefits are related to employment status, as in certain Southern European countries. In the case of self-employment and entrepreneurship, labor market integration requires access to financial services.

However, European immigration policies over past decades have proven lacking. Across Europe, the ratio of employment rates of immigrants to those of non-immigrants is sometimes as great as one to three. Research also suggests that overall earnings of migrants tend to be lower than those of native workers. Such discrepancies point to the different positions held by natives and migrants even in the same sectors, but may also indicate discrimination in employment.

Immigrants experience greater risk of social exclusion and poverty than the resident population. They are often more exposed to being employed in precarious work and/or undeclared work or in jobs for which they are over-qualified.

In addition, the language skills of immigrants and the educational path of their children are often unsatisfactory, raising concerns regarding their future personal and professional development.

True integration into the labor market is thus a major step on migrants' road to economic independence and social acceptance. This is especially important given the fact that migrants face re-socialization and changes in every facet of their lives.

Migrants experience feelings of insecurity, as well as disappointment and fear, as they struggle to adapt to a new environment, culture, language and behavior patterns. Familiar family relationships undergo potentially harmful change: the family becomes less paternalistic and authoritarian, the children adapt much faster than their parents, who are then forced to lean on them.

The process of their integration into the job market can be complex. The difficulties are not simply economic; employment boosts a sense of self-worth, of belonging and involvement, of independence and confidence, of control over one's life, self-expression and self-realization. In the absence of employment, migrants are forced to deal with a lack of all these elements in their lives.

Research conducted by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has found that the single most important predictor of immigrants' labor market outcomes tends to be the category of entry. People who migrate for employment generally integrate better into the labor market, not only in the years following arrival but also over the longer term. Migrants who have the greatest difficulty integrating into the work force are those whose primary motivation for migration is family reunification and humanitarian needs, rather than employment.

According to OECD evaluations from 2010, the acquisition of citizenship improves the labor market integration of immigrants, with greater employment opportunities, higher wages and better quality jobs, even controlling for differences in education, age and country of origin. This may be due to a positive signaling effect for employers and/or to a decrease in the administrative costs associated with employing foreigners, as well as immigrants' eligibility for public or regulated professions and educational support.

Another predictor of successful labor market integration of migrants is their level of social integration. A survey conducted in 2006 for the Jewish Agency for Israel among 500 immigrants and 500 veteran Israelis found that in addition to language competence and the length of their time in the country, the level of immigrants' social involvement (with friends and neighbors, participation in elections, etc.) directly influences their pay level and earning power.

The Situation in Serbia

Unemployment is one of the biggest economic and social problems facing the Republic of Serbia: the unemployment rate for persons of age eligible for work (15-64) reached nearly 24% in 2012. Thus, the main focus of the country's evolving legislative framework and policies has been on regulating the employment of Serbian nationals in the country and abroad.

Nevertheless, the requirements of EU approximation include the need to create a transparent and EU-compatible framework for the employment of foreigners, covering such areas as mechanisms safeguarding employment rights and regulating access to the labor market based on professional characteristics; equal working conditions; recru-

itment industry regulation; enforcement of labor code and migration legislation in the area of foreigners' employment through labor inspections.

Serbia's legal code provides access to active employment policy measures to every foreigner who is registered with the National Employment Service. In order to register with the NES, one must have a valid work and residence permit, either temporary or permanent.

These foreigners enjoy the same rights as Serbians registered with the National Employment Service: access to job and training centers for active job search, programs of additional education and training, entitlement to subsidies for employment.

Rights to social security, such as pension and disability insurance, social protection and financial support to families and children, is provided in accordance with bilateral agreements with other countries on social security.

Many migrants living in Serbia came to the country in order to work and are thus highly motivated and do not require incentives to work or programs designed to encourage employment.

However, some may encounter difficulty finding work given economic downturns, others (especially women who moved to Serbia for family reasons) may require help if they have not worked outside their homes, and future developments may increase the number of migrants, both skilled and unskilled, requiring specific programs to enable their job market integration.

It should be noted that residence permits do not automatically provide the right to work: according to the Law on Foreigners, those granted temporary residence "shall be obliged to stay in the Republic of Serbia in accordance with the purpose for which the stay has been approved". In other words, those who come to the Republic of Serbia to study or get married, are not automatically eligible for work permits. In this regard, it would be beneficial to enable access to the labor market for foreigners receiving residence permits on the basis of family reunification, in addition to other benefits for which they are eligible.

Skilled Migration

Many OECD countries have introduced measures to promote skilled immigration for sectors with labor shortages, such as information and communication technology (ICT), biotechnology, health care and education.

But there is ample evidence that foreign qualifications and work experience are often discounted: immigrants who have acquired their training and education in developing countries are less remunerated than their native-born peers. Skilled migrants are also disproportionately over-qualified for the low or medium-skilled positions they hold in most OECD countries

This is attributable to the fact that degrees and work experience acquired in non-OECD countries are not always perceived by employers as fully “equivalent”, highlighting the importance of transparent assessment, certification and accreditation processes, with the offer of additional “bridging” courses which enable migrants to obtain a qualification that is familiar to employers.

In EU countries the recognition procedures are generally lengthy, bureaucratic and expensive, and skills are often evaluated differently by country. The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, developed in 1997 by the Council of Europe and UNESCO, has proposed standards for recognition. Nevertheless, some EU countries still have no legal framework for recognizing the professional qualifications and technical training of third-country nationals, besides language proficiency. This represents a barrier to labor market inclusion and a waste of human resources.

In contrast to qualified migrants, low qualified migrants tend to have an employment rate that is close to, or even above, that of low-qualified native-born.

Language Proficiency

Mastery of the host-country’s language and basic knowledge of its institutions are prerequisites for integration, not only in the labor market but also in society as a whole. However, there is a balance to be achieved between the duration of such programs or the linguistic

mastery required of participants, on the one hand, and the objective of promoting early labor market entry.

Analyses for Sweden, for example, have indicated that language courses shortly after arrival significantly enhance later employment prospects, but there appear to be upper limits (some 500 hours) beyond which no further impact is visible. Prolonged learning also keeps immigrants away from the labor market for too long, and this needs to be balanced against better language mastery.

There are two main approaches towards language acquisition for immigrants towards workforce integration. The “Work First” approach focuses on placement and is based on an **Enhanced Direct Employment Model** which provides minimal training and education. Training, such as it is, lasts between 8 and 16 weeks at most. The second approach is based on the **Developmental Transitional Employment models**, which stress development of the human resource in order to improve participants’ job market qualifications and readiness through training, job searching and experience. In the former, language acquisition is emphasized after employment has been found. In the latter, employment programs invest immigrants language and employability skills before they enter the job market.

Each approach has clear benefits and drawbacks. On the one hand, both policy makers and immigrants would prefer for employment to begin as soon as possible. On the other hand, it is often difficult for individuals to find the time to invest in language acquisition when juggling work responsibilities.

Studies conducted in Israel, a target immigration state, sought to determine the contribution of language proficiency to job market integration in skilled professions (e.g., medicine, teaching, industry and technology). The researchers found that immigrants were greatly lacking in terms of professional terminology in Hebrew. Their managers complained that this presented a serious barrier to their integration, making it hard for them to understand instructions and to communicate with colleagues and clients. For example, they were unable to understand workplace safety guidelines or to write up reports – both potentially damaging problems.

The researchers recommended teaching immigrants professional language and terminology in the initial stages of their absorption

and following up with sector or occupation-specific addenda once they find work.

A pioneering, interactive web-based site called “**Employment through Study**” (Delet Ptuha, in Hebrew) seeks to improve the language proficiency of immigrants to Israel from Ethiopia. The content is based on the world of employment. It enables adult users to control the time of their study, the amount, the place and the pace. The site focuses subjects such as how to look for work, how to behave at a job interview, how to succeed on the job. It includes short clips of work-related situations, thus introducing the users to work-related terms, and tells the stories of migrants who have encountered cultural differences at their workplace.

The site uses simple language and is “shame proof” – users can read the words over and over, ask question and advance at their own speed. It creates a sense of empowerment.

Workshops

Successful Integration of migrants into the work force is a lengthy process. It requires assessment of their needs and interests, identification of their personal and professional strengths and barriers to employment and their transferable skills, providing job and career options, developing an action plan and strategies with clients, connecting them with resources, referring them to appropriate workshops.

Workshops can contribute in two ways:

- General support and assistance, both social and emotional, in adjusting to a new country and dealing with barriers to employment, such as decreased self-confidence, language and cultural difficulties. This is designed to help participants present potential employers with their professional experience in a convincing manner that will highlight their abilities and record. It is also aimed at imparting certain norms and concepts with which some migrants may not be familiar, such as adherence to timetables and deadlines.
- Providing job search skills to ensure that the process is as short and efficient as possible: teaching migrants to write their curriculum vitae in their new language and to make it relevant to local job market conditions; advising them on how to approach employers and to conduct themselves in a job interview according to local customs but in a way that gives expression to their abilities. Workshops should also acquaint participants with the technology for job searching (computer, internet, job bank, voicemail), help them fill out forms and applications and provide them with practical labor market information.

Ideally, basic information about learning, job and career opportunities should be available to migrant/ethnic groups in their native languages.

In order to conduct workshops and guide migrants in their job searches, counselors should not only focus on providing labor market and/or employer related information, but be knowledgeable and resourceful enough to provide support for their personal, social, cultural, educational and vocational adjustment and progress.

A case in point is Norway's Second Chance program, a pilot qualification scheme for those with immigrant backgrounds but without employment and dependent on social benefits, young immigrants between 18 and 25 years and stay at home women not receiving assistance benefits. It combines language training with work experience and some elements of mentoring, according to the individual needs of participants. Case workers closely track participants' progress (no more than 15 at a time). Their close interaction and follow-up with the participants are the main features of this pilot. Participants receive a tax-free living subsidy, and can participate in the program for up to two years.

According to monitoring data, 66 out of the 157 participants who completed the program in 2009 entered into employment or education, while most of the others proceeded to register as job seekers and entered other types of labor market programs.

One of the challenges was recruitment of stay at home women, who were not registered as benefits recipients. This was accomplished through health clinics, voluntary organizations, adult education institutions, former participants, etc. In many cases it was necessary to involve the entire family in order to explain the importance of the program to ensure the women's participation and to provide child care services and/or allow part time participation. The project showed a high demand by stay at home women and many appeared willing to participate even without the participation allowance.

Israel provides specialized employment centers for its immigrants, both skilled and unskilled, where they undergo professional assessment and counseling, learn professional terminology in Hebrew, computer skills and English, and are then placed in jobs. While at these centers, immigrants receive a basic living allowance.

A study conducted among immigrants two and three years after leaving the centers found significant improvement: a substantial growth in the number of those employed (from 35% before entering the center to 80%); 80% reported working full time. Most reported a high degree of satisfaction in their jobs and 75% said they would recommend the centers to other immigrants.

Mentoring has also proven effective for labor force integration of migrants. Denmark and France, in particular, have introduced it on

a rather large scale, matching immigrants with a native-born people of the same sex, age and occupation. The native-born person provides the immigrant with basic information on procedures, institutions, how-things-are-done-here, etc. The mentor can also make the immigrant benefit from his/her own network of contacts and in some cases even act as an intermediary with potential employers. These programs are attractive to host countries since they involve the native population. In addition, the cost to the host country is limited, because mentors are generally volunteers, although they do undergo special training to sensitize them to cultural differences and to immigrant expectations.

Self-employment is also of increasing relevance in some countries. In order to support this option, migrants must be provided with access to financing in order to set up a micro-business. In Finland, the Ministry of Trade and Industry established a working group to advance immigrant entrepreneurship by supporting networking, interaction, education and training, advisory and mentoring services and information.

In Portugal, the Project of Promoting Entrepreneurship Immigrant for the period 2010-2013, aims to foster entrepreneurial attitudes among immigrant communities, with special focus on those living in poor neighborhoods.

Integration of Female Migrants

Female migrants face particular difficulties in the labor market and are more likely than immigrant males and native-born women to be employed in undeclared work, with insecure and low wages, no access to social benefits, long working hours and bad working conditions.

Women who move to another country to marry may also encounter integration barriers, being totally dependent on their husband and his family. This is especially true in more traditional cultures.

Israel's Eshet Chayil ("woman of valor") program is geared for such female migrants. It was developed by the Israeli branch of the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC-Israel) in the 1990s to help Ethiopian immigrants integrate into the Israeli labor market. In

light of its success, it was adapted for other target populations, such as immigrants from the Caucasus in the former Soviet Union and Bukhara. It is especially designed for women from culturally conservative backgrounds, who have not worked outside their homes.

The program lasts three years and is based on the approach that integration into working life is achieved by a gradual, supervised process.

To ensure that the women secure and maintain employment, it provides a broad support framework which includes addressing issues such as psychological readiness for work and family adjustment to the changing role of the wife/mother.

The program operates in stages: three-month job-readiness workshops; individual mentoring that guides the women through the work search process; a Job Club, which provides ongoing support to employed program graduates, motivating them to hold onto their jobs and advance. The program's Employment Leadership Group is designed for women who are identified as potential leaders, with the goal of empowering women in their communities.

The first step is the workshop and tours of job sites. The workshop is designed to provide mental and practical job readiness, to generate encouragement and motivation to work, to provide job search tools, to familiarize the immigrant women with the world of employment and to strengthen their knowledge of work-related Hebrew.

In addition to individual counseling and group workshops, participants form peer groups for mutual support which also serve as the basis for the next stage – professional advancement. This stage includes workshops on such issues as financial literacy, mothering and family relationships. In order to improve participants' wages and mobility, the following stage offers more advanced workshops: basic and advanced computer skills; continuing education classes; Hebrew and English language instruction; professional assessment and training.

Best Practices

Following is a “basket” of best practices from the experience of immigrant integration in Israel, Canada and Europe.

- Provide governmental employment centers with annual listings of immigrants, including countries of origin, age and occupation; orient staff of employment centers to the cultural needs of main immigrant groups.
- Provide immigrants with information about funding sources (such as student loans, grants); refer clients to professional associations and licensing bodies for credential recognition; refer clients for educational and vocational training and provide information about support services (daycare, for example); provide information about personal and family counseling services.
- Build client confidence and self-esteem, as well as their communication and inter-personal skills; provide cultural orientation; encourage assertive behavior and use of stress management.
- Provide job leads, interpret and translate for clients and employers. Match employer and client needs, persuade/convince employers, educate employers and clients about workplace expectations and ethics, arrange wage subsidies.
- Telephone and visit clients and employers, and invite feedback from them.
- Follow up with clients to monitor their progress, offering bonus payments after three months, six months and a year.
- Provide incentives for municipalities and language-course providers to get immigrants rapidly integrated into the labor market.
- Provide all relevant services for migrants “under a single roof”.
- Establish contacts between immigrants and employers and help to overcome employers’ hiring reluctance
- Promote temporary employment and temporary agency work as a stepping-stone to more stable employment for immigrants.

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CHAPTER 3

Cultural Competence: Adapting Services for Diverse Populations

Immigration of foreigners to relatively homogenous societies often leads to misunderstanding and hostility between newcomers and veteran citizens. Much of the problems encountered result from clashing cultural expectations. Service providers in the host society often misinterpret behavior or reactions of migrants; problems are created on both sides because modes of behavior and interaction are unfamiliar. For successful integration of immigrants and countering xenophobia, it is critical that government and local service providers are aware of these differences, and to plan policies and procedures accordingly.

Cultural competence is defined as "the ability to think, feel, and act in ways that acknowledge, respect, and build upon ethnic, sociocultural, and linguistic diversity." It requires awareness of the fact that others have different sensitivities to our own, which can drastically affect their perceptions and interactions. Cultural competence is increasingly identified as an essential tool for the successful integration of migrants, as well as interaction with ethnic and religious minorities. This is especially true in the delivery of government and local services in the area of health, welfare, education and law enforcement.

Cultural competence does not just happen. It is a developmental process for both individuals and the agencies they work for. Becoming comfortable with other cultures is a lifelong journey that can, at times, be painful as people are forced to confront their own strongly held views.

Social scientists identify three hierarchical components that make up cultural competency: First comes Awareness, then Knowledge, and lastly Skills.

Awareness. Awareness is consciousness of one's personal reactions to people who are different. An American police officer who re-

cognizes that he profiles people who look like they are from Mexico as "illegal aliens" has cultural awareness of his reactions to this group of people.

Knowledge. Social science research indicates that our values and beliefs about equality may be inconsistent with our behaviors, and we may be unaware of it. Social psychologists have found that many people who score low on a prejudice test tend to do things in cross cultural encounters that exemplify prejudice (e.g., using out-dated labels such as "illegal aliens" or "colored"). This makes the Knowledge component an important part of cultural competence development.

Skills. This component focuses on practicing cultural competence to perfection. Communication is the fundamental tool by which people interact in organizations. This includes gestures and other non-verbal communication that tend to vary from culture to culture.

Cultural competence cannot turn officials and service providers into experts in the customs of minorities and foreigners. However, it does teach them to detect instances in which people's conduct is dictated by their cultural traditions, and gives them tools to respond in a sensitive and respectful manner that builds bridges of communication.

Cultural Competence in Health Services

Cultural competence in health care describes the ability of health systems to provide care to patients with diverse values, beliefs, and behaviors, including the tailoring of services to meet patients' social, cultural and linguistic needs. The ultimate goal is a health care system and workforce that can deliver the highest quality of care to every patient, regardless of race, ethnicity, cultural background or language proficiency.

Not surprisingly, the most developed area of cultural competence is to be found in the delivery of health services. Cultural incompetence in this field can, obviously, be fatal. It also risks denying migrants a fundamental human right – access to healthcare. In other words, cultural competence in the provision of health services is not a luxury, but rather a necessity.

Language Barriers: The first problem is one of language. Despite the growing number of migrants moving around the world and the

increasing population diversity in many countries, medical staff often do not speak the same language as their patients, severely inhibiting patients' ability to access services crucial to their well-being and even to their survival. Patients cannot describe their problem, ask or answer questions, understand the forms they have to sign or the instructions for taking the medication prescribed by doctors.

Culture Barriers: In addition to language barriers, a diverse migrant population often holds dissimilar views and expectations regarding their health and healthcare, yet doctors, nurses and other medical staff are generally not trained to address these differences.

Cultures vary in their definitions of health and illness. A condition that is endemic in a population may be seen as normal, rather than as illness.

For example, in rural Latin America, people expect to lose their teeth beginning in early adulthood. Convincing them to seek dental care is a challenge that requires an understanding of their different beliefs and expectations.

Many Africans regard physical and mental illness as the result of disturbances in the harmony between an individual and the cosmos, which may mean his family, friends or a deity.

Knowledge of customs and healing traditions are indispensable to the design of treatment. It is important, for example, that health practitioners understand that some patients may want to incorporate traditional healing and health practices with conventional medicine, that different cultures have different norms about modesty. Some people may be reluctant to proceed with treatment before consulting a community elder, religious leader or alternative health practitioner.

Appropriate modes of communication for news related to the patient's medical condition also vary. In some cultures, the family is informed before the patient about a terminal condition. Sometimes, due to the belief that telling the patient would only worsen their condition and disrespect their value to the family, the family may shield bad news from the patient.

A poor diagnosis due to poor understanding of language or culture can sometimes result in fatal consequences. Cultural misunderstandings and language barriers are also liable to expose hospitals and clinics to medical negligence claims.

In a study of 35 medical malpractice claims in the United States, researchers from the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley sought to determine whether language barriers had a direct or indirect impact on the patients' health.

More than \$5 million in damages and legal fees resulted from the claims, in which two children and three adults died. One patient was rendered comatose, one underwent a leg amputation, and a child suffered major organ damage.

In one case, a sick child was used by the medical staff as an interpreter to explain her condition to her parents, until she suffered respiratory arrest and died. In 32 of the 35 cases, the health care providers did not use competent interpreters. Twelve of the claims involved failure to translate important documents, such as informed consent forms and discharge instructions.

Thus, one of the main pillars of culture competence is providing translation to enable the interaction between staff and patients. For example, The Jerusalem Inter-Cultural Center, Israel's leading cultural competence training institute, requires hospitals and clinics enrolled in its program to have translators on hand or to provide interpretation services by phone. They are also required to facilitate important cultural adaptations, such as separate therapy rooms for men and women who observe strict Moslem or Jewish tradition and prayer rooms and chaplaincy services for different religions. Each institution assigns a staff member to oversee the transition to cultural competence.

In February 2011 Israel's Ministry of Health issued a landmark directive entitled, "Adapting the Healthcare System to Make It Culturally and Linguistically Accessible". The regulations mandate that all forms requiring a patient's signature appear in Hebrew, Arabic, English and Russian; signs must be posted in Hebrew, English and Arabic; call centers for medical services must offer service in Hebrew, English, Arabic, Russian and Amharic; and some form of interpretation service must be offered to any patient who requests it, be it by an employed interpreter, a staff member who is bilingual or a telephone service. The directive applies to hospitals, as well as health fund clinics and public health facilities. Every healthcare provider has two years to implement the directive.

Beyond interpreters and religious needs, there are additional aspects of cultural competence, for example understanding patients'

expectations of proper treatment. For example, in some cultures patients expect doctors to touch them when treating them. Doctors who only look at test results and ask questions about aches and pains are considered bad doctors in those cultures. Patients feel that blood should be drawn, or at least blood pressure should be measured.

Training of medical staff should therefore include an explanation of such expectations and a recommendation that doctors perform minor procedures, like measuring blood pressure even when not necessary, in order to give patients a sense that they are receiving proper care.

Some of the most effective cultural competence training for professionals includes simulation, with medical practitioners taking on the role of patients and tasting the frustration of misunderstood patients.

Challenges for Service Providers

A clinician must remember that bilingual skill (understanding and speaking the language) does not equate to bicultural skill (understanding and respecting the culture)—both are necessary for culturally competent service delivery.

Becoming culturally competent requires examination of one's values and beliefs. For example, social service providers who value punctuality and careful scheduling may need to examine their frustration with migrants who place less emphasis on clock and calendar. Interventionists who value frugality may have trouble understanding why a family with very limited resources has just purchased a cellular phone or electronic equipment.

Interventionists who pride themselves on sensitive but direct communications may have difficulty with families who do not look them in the eye or those who nod "yes" when the answer is "no" (common practice in some countries like Bulgaria, Greece, Sri Lanka).

Social workers or teachers who value privacy may have difficulty understanding why a preschooler in a migrant family is still sleeping in his parents' bedroom.

Interventionists from cultures that value interdependence over independence, cooperation above competition, authoritative rather than permissive child rearing may need to examine how these values affect their practice.

For example, families who are striving to toilet train their child at a very young age, who are encouraging self-feeding, and who are leaving the child with nonfamily babysitters starting at infancy may be puzzling to interventionists who place a higher value on interdependence than independence. When a young child talks back or interrupts adult conversations, some cultures view the child's behavior as his or her right to personal expression, whereas others may see the same behavior as disrespectful and unacceptable.

Parents who come to school meetings and do not engage in small talk with their children's teachers may be viewed as brusque and rude by the teachers, who are used to connecting interpersonally before conducting business.

Training Service Providers

It is advisable to include cross-cultural training as an integrated component of the training and professional development of health care providers at all levels. However, compulsory mandates to attend cultural competence training programs can lead to resistance or at best superficial participation, with professionals viewing it as a criticism of their performance.

An Organizational Approach: Therefore, an organizational approach is more effective, involving participants in decisions about the training program and emphasizing the benefits of cultural competence for all the patients and clients, as well as the whole organization.

Focusing only on developing the cultural competence of individual care givers will not necessarily result in a culturally competent organization. To achieve such a goal, the whole organization needs to be committed to the policy and goals of cultural competence.

Although factual knowledge about groups, habits and customs may be more acceptable to participants in training courses, training should be moved beyond the delivery of facts to challenging ethnocentric beliefs, practices and unwitting prejudice among staff.

A Safe Environment: This aspect of culture competence training invokes strong feelings and even with skilled facilitation may leave well-meaning people feeling guilty about their ethnocentricity or prejudi-

ce. It is therefore essential that the training offer a safe environment to challenge individual biased behavior, whilst not attacking the individual per se.

Commencing training with cultural self-awareness is non-threatening, as it highlights the cultural nature of all human beings and helps to establish rapport with the trainers.

Training should also allow sufficient time for debriefing in order to allow participants to identify how past weaknesses may become strengths.

Pre and post training assessment of cultural competence is highly desirable for three reasons: to provide information about existing levels of cultural competence, to give trainers an indication of the effectiveness of their work and to provide participants with a measure of their progress.

Cultural Competence in Police Work

Good relations with migrant communities are essential for good police work in handling crime by migrants and against them.

Experience gained by police forces in ethnically diverse cities in the United States and Western Europe clearly demonstrates the need for a positive, proactive approach in order to make it possible to prevent potential conflict, cultivate trust and a willingness to cooperate with the police. This is especially relevant given the global trend in law enforcement to prioritize prevention over repression. Repression does not offer a systematic solution to the problem of crime and has only minimal impact on the causes and conditions which lead to socio-pathological and anti-social behavior.

It is no longer enough to know how to complete a report, handcuff a suspect and accurately fire a weapon. Professional officers need superior communication and problem-solving skills in other cultures.

The challenge facing law enforcement, then, is to devise preventive programs focusing on the needs of the public, especially at a local level, in accordance with the modern concept of policing as a public service. In countries with migrant populations, cultural competence is a key element and prerequisite for effective prevention.

A lack of cultural competence can also jeopardize officers' safety when they come into contact with migrants: they relate to the foreigners through the lenses of their upbringing, culture and values, ignoring other points of view that influence migrants' behavior. This can lead them, for example, to perceive a threat where none exists or to ignore a potential threat.

An understanding of bias is important to law enforcement professionals because of the role bias plays in the decision-making process. Social scientists have conducted several studies to determine the role that bias plays in a decision to use deadly force. This research has shown that study participants shoot at more unarmed blacks than unarmed whites. The results go one step further and show that even when the subject is holding a weapon, participants fail to shoot more whites than blacks and more people wearing Muslim headdress than those wearing none.

In addition to being aware of bias and understanding its implications, culture competence requires an understanding of the various cultures that police officers are likely to encounter in their communities.

Asian Migrants: For example, officers should remember that when interacting with migrants from China or other Asian countries, they must show respect – for example, by addressing the oldest male in the household or another elder who can speak for the family. They should be advised that direct eye contact is considered disrespectful and should therefore refrain from assuming that someone who looks away from them is not being truthful.

People of Asian origin consider the head to be sacred because it is the highest point on the body – police officers are therefore advised to avoid touching the head of a witness, even that of a child. Conversely, officers should refrain from showing the bottom of their feet, which is viewed as an insult.

Moslem Migrants: When dealing with Moslem migrants, officers must be made aware that The Qur'an is the holy book of Islam and told to show great respect for the book if it is found on someone. It should only be touched with clean hands and should never be placed on the floor.

In general, officers who achieve cultural competence are likely to be more proficient and fair, thus contributing to the legitimacy of police in their society. In particular, the ability to communicate effectively with various cultures improves the likelihood of receiving cooperation from all members of the community.

Police Training in Cultural Competence

A police force that makes cultural competence of its officers a priority must redefine the content of its basic professional training. Training should include the study of human rights, the fight against intolerance, the effects of xenophobia and racism, as well as programs to develop tolerance vis-à-vis members of migrant groups. Serving police officers, i.e. those who have completed their basic training, should also undergo seminars or other cultural competence training programs, as should senior management.

For the successful implementation of culturally competent policies, the police must rid itself of officers with xenophobic or racist views by weeding out such recruits through targeted entrance exams and personality assessments.

The admissions procedure should be complemented with an investigation into the past behavior of candidates at their place of residence, the schools they attended, their former employers, special-interest organizations they have joined. This is normal procedure in certain countries, such as Canada.

A less costly and simpler option is the observation of candidates during their basic professional training and then on an ongoing basis through periodic service assessments.

Community Policing

Community policing also goes a long way towards creating positive relationships with migrant populations. Migrant groups often fear police or authorities, out of concern that their status will be called into question, and do not report crimes among themselves, or inflicted by veteran citizens. Creating an ongoing relationship with immigrant gro-

ups helps create an environment of understanding and mutual responsibility.

In Israel, community liaison officers assigned to neighborhoods with high concentrations of immigrants cultivate relationships with community leaders. This approach has helped police better understand differing cultural norms, and adjust their approach accordingly. The cooperation with community leaders has also been effective in reducing crime as the atmosphere of joint responsibility encourages self-policing.

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CHAPTER 4

Language Instruction

Guiding foreigners into a new world by providing them with access to a new language is one of the major challenges posed by migration. Learning a new language is not only acquisition of a communication tool, but also a process of learning about other cultures and the life, history and traditions of another society.

Language acquisition is therefore a determining factor in migrants' prospects for successful integration, an avenue leading to self-fulfillment and away from social and economic marginalization. For their host community and country, it is a key element in maintaining social cohesion.

Most EU countries have introduced policies which require some language competence and "knowledge of society" as a formal condition to acquire entry, residency, family reunion, work permits and other rights, although there is significant variation among countries in terms of conditions, proficiency level required for courses and tests, types of courses offered and cost.

The required proficiency level, for example, ranges from basic CEFR level A1 (see below for detail) for entry to the country, to large variation across countries for residency and citizenship from A1 to B2. Almost all countries provide official language courses, most of them for free. They are compulsory in at least seven countries. At least 13 countries require examinations in an acquired second language to acquire residency. Some countries also have language requirements for other purposes, such as access to welfare benefits.

Barriers

For policy makers and practitioners, one of the basic obstacles is the need to adapt the learning to the wide variety of linguistic, ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds of the students; it may range in age from young adult (late teens/early twenties) to elderly (sixties or seventies); educational experience and achievement are almost infinitely variable.

For migrants themselves, the obstacles to applying themselves to learning a new language include limited financial resources and shortage of good quality, affordable childcare. This latter issue particularly affects women and is an important reason for significant drop-out levels from language classes for migrants. Working life often inhibits participation for both sexes. Once migrants have found paid work, which is often at a low level and may involve long or unpredictable working hours, they have neither the time nor the energy for learning.

Personal factors also affect migrants' ability to acquire a second language, among them poor basic skills in their own language and the resulting lack of confidence in their potential.

Proficiency Levels

The Council of Europe's "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" (CEFR) aims to provide a comprehensive basis for language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of language proficiency.

The CEFR divides proficiency into these levels:

Level A1: learners can interact in a simple way, ask and answer simple questions about themselves, where they live, people they know, and things they have; initiate and respond to simple statements on familiar topics. Their proficiency at this level depends on their interlocutors speaking clearly and slowly. In **reading** they can recognize and understand names, words and simple sentences. They can **write** a short simple text and fill in a form with personal details.

Level A2: learners can use simple forms of greeting and address; ask people how they are and react to news; ask and answer questions about what they do at work and in their free time; make

and respond to invitations; discuss what to do, where to go and make arrangements to meet. They can make simple transactions in shops, post offices or banks; ask for directions, buy tickets. In **reading** they can understand very short, simple texts and find specific, predictable information in texts that they cannot understand in detail (written notices and instructions, for example). They can **write** short, simple notes and messages.

Level B1: learners are able to maintain interaction in a range of contexts, follow the main points of extended discussion, give or seek views in an informal discussion with friends. They are also able cope with less routine situations on public transport, enter unprepared into conversations on familiar topics, make a complaint. B1 learners can also follow radio and TV programs, provided that delivery is relatively slow and clear. In **reading** they can understand texts that describe situations and events, as well as the expression of feelings and wishes. They can **write** simple text dealing with familiar topics and describing their experiences and impressions.

Level B2: learners can sustain discussion by providing relevant explanations and arguments; explain a problem and make it clear that his/her counterpart in a negotiation must make a concession; speculate about causes, consequences, hypothetical situations; understand in detail what is said to him/her in the standard spoken language; interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. In **reading** they can understand articles and reports that express attitudes and viewpoints, and contemporary literary prose. They can **write** clear, detailed text covering a wide range of subjects; they can communicate detailed information and highlight the personal significance of events.

Level C1: learners are able to conduct fluent, spontaneous communication although not with native-speaker or near native-speaker competence. They are able to convey finer shades of meaning and have a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.

Basic Instruction

Programs for teaching a second language should be designed to provide the following skills:

- listening comprehension
- reading comprehension
- pronunciation and intonation
- oral fluency
- writing and composition
- grammar and vocabulary
- communication and learning strategies

Courses for beginners should generally focus on topics that will help newcomers participate in daily life in their communities. Themes may include:

- renting accommodation
- using public transportation
- banking and shopping
- medical care
- making friends

In order to increase interest and effectiveness of these courses, teachers can organise opportunities to meet native speakers in informal settings and take their students on field trips, for example to a bank, grocery store, job site. Intermediate and advanced level classes generally focus on improving fluency and communication skills, and providing transitional support for those wishing to go on to further training or educational opportunities.

Depending on the make-up of the class, teaching of a second language can also include an employment component, with topics such as interview strategies, work vocabulary and workplace communication strategies.

Work-Related Language Instruction

While general language instruction is essential in order to provide migrants with basic survival skills in a new land, language training within the context of a work place is also essential – for the migrant’s progress and for the employer who depends on him.

However, time and financial constraints often force migrants to choose between working and learning the local language, even though their inability to communicate with any degree of proficiency is likely to impede their progress and earning ability.

Language training programs for general workplace competence, such as routine office or plant interactions, or for specific industries, such as healthcare or construction, have demonstrated success both in the United States and Europe. Some curricula focus specifically on use of language for certain professions, from taxi driving to nursing.

One effective way to enable migrants to work and learn relevant language for their work is to combine language training with on-the-job skill training. This generally requires coordination between different government agencies (those charged with migrant integration and those overseeing vocational training and labor market policies or adult education), as well as cooperation of employers and unions in freeing up their employees for on-site language instruction during their work day.

Further discussion of this topic can be found in the chapter on employment.

Language Tests

Language tests for migrants are designed to serve one of two purposes: either to bar them from entering a country in the first place or, when they are already resident in the country, to determine whether or not they have achieved a stated level of proficiency in the language of the host community.

Tests that serve the former purpose are usually administered in the migrants’ country of origin, and their level depends on the immigration policy of the country in question. If there is a need for unskilled labour, the test may focus only on oral communication at a very

basic level. If, on the other hand, there is a need for qualified professionals, the test will be at a more advanced level and may pay as much attention to reading and writing as to listening and speaking. In both cases the test is likely to be designed independently of any course of instruction, and will reflect the perceived needs of the receiving country rather than the needs of the would-be migrants.

Goals of Instruction

Instruction of a second language should strike a balance between oral and written proficiency.

However, since the purpose of teaching migrants the language of their host country is to enable essential communication, **speaking and understanding** skills are at first more necessary than proficiency in reading and writing. It is more important that migrants get their message across than that their grammar is correct or that after many weeks or months of instruction their pronunciation still sounds foreign.

Nonetheless, **reading and writing** should play an important role in the development of language proficiency, for three reasons:

- The technology of literacy (writing things down) helps to organize and memorize whatever one is trying to learn;
- The written form of a language helps to make its structures visible and thus easier to analyze and understand;
- Most employment requires at least basic functional literacy (writing short notes, filling in forms).

Content-Based Instruction

One way to increase the effectiveness of second-language instruction is to ensure better co-ordination between course content and the language-acquisition goals of the learners.

Content-based instruction (CBI) is a method of teaching foreign languages that integrates language instruction with instruction in the content areas. In recent years content-based instruction has become increasingly popular as a means of developing linguistic ability.

The focus of a CBI lesson is on the topic or subject matter. This could be anything that interests the students, from a serious science subject to their favorite film star or a topical news story. This is thought to be a more natural way of developing language ability and one that corresponds more to the way people learn their first language, as well.

In content-based instruction, students become proficient in the language because the focus is on the exchange of important messages and language use is purposeful. It can make learning a language more interesting and motivating.

Addressing Migrant Needs

The predominant "one-size-fits-all" approach to language courses for migrants is increasingly acknowledged to be inadequate. Designers of curricula should therefore try to find out what learners want and need, both in terms of employment, as well as in terms of social and conversational skills.

For example, some migrants want to learn technical language to pass a driving license test; others need a fast and focused approach in order to be able to start a particular job; and others are interested in helping their children with homework.

For example, language courses should be organized for different work categories, addressing people with the same professional profile in order to provide them with specific, tailor-made courses matching their needs.

Language training should also aim to assist adult migrants with their integration process, for example by offering courses in citizenship, orientation to national services, etc.

Learning Conditions

Classes for adult migrants can be taught at:

- Academic institutions (public schools, language centers, colleges)
- Community facilities (community centers, churches)
- Job sites (factories, hospitals, hotels, offices).

Ideally, classes should not include more than 20 students.

It is advisable for the government or municipality to provide formal accreditation to a suitable body in order to ensure that language instruction is suited to migration and integration policies and that high standards are maintained.

Instruction Flexibility

Low motivation and high drop-out rates from language classes for migrants have often been found to be the result of a strict delivery time and place. Language courses are typically provided at a fixed time and through face-to-face delivery, for example, two hours once or twice a week in a classroom, starting generally in September.

Given the diversity of the adult migrants, programs should also address the needs of those arriving at other times of the year or those working in shifts or those unable to come to a learning center, for example. Programs should aim to provide instruction at the workplace, at different times of day. Offering support through mentoring and buddy schemes have also proven effective techniques.

Involving the Host Society

One of the common complaints among adult students of a second language is the lack of opportunities to speak with natives and practice their newly acquired skills, due to residential segregation, limited contacts at work.

Employers can work in partnership with educational institutions, the first providing possibility of employment or internships, the second ensuring intensive language and specialised courses aimed at preparing learners for future employment.

Schools can also provide a setting for language practice with native-born parents meeting the migrant parents of their children's classmates. The involvement of parents in the school life of their children has been found to have positive effects for both migrant parents and children, and also for the host society.

Best Practices and Recommendations

Acquiring proficiency in a second or foreign language is a highly complex phenomenon. Its development to advanced levels is a matter not simply of attending language classes; it also requires extensive engagement in real-world communication in the target language, which means that advanced proficiency is strongly oriented to the learner's professional, social, cultural or academic life.

One of the basic steps before setting out on any instruction program is to assess the literacy needs from the learner's perspective. Experience has shown that if these needs are not met, students are more likely to drop out than to voice their dissatisfaction, or not to sign up for classes, at all.

The assessment should address the level of the migrants' language proficiency (if it exists), their degree of proficiency in their native tongue, their expectations from the course. It should focus and build on migrants' accomplishments and abilities, allowing them to display what they know and using the information in order to place them according to their level, to build a relevant curriculum for their needs and to provide them with appropriate material and instruction system.

Ideally, in order to best respond to their desires and needs, language instruction for migrants should be divided into target-oriented types, in addition to levels in accordance with proficiency (beginners, intermediate, advanced, etc.).

Instruction of a new language for the purpose of developing **life skills** should focus on topics or functions of daily life, such as going to the doctor, getting a job, shopping, or managing money.

Instruction of a new language can also integrate the teaching of **civic-related** issues for the purposes of passing citizenship or naturalization exams. Lessons can include such topics as civic participation, civil rights and responsibilities, the history and politics of the new country.

Language can also be taught along with preparation for the **job market**. These programs may concentrate on general pre-employment skills, such as finding a job or preparing for an interview, or they may target preparation for jobs in specific fields such as care-taking. Where

possible, language can also be taught to migrants in work settings, in order to develop language skills directly relevant for their jobs.

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CHAPTER 5

Education: Integrating Migrants into the School System

The right to education is a constitutional guaranty in Serbia. The law provides foreign nationals and stateless persons with the right to education and upbringing under the same conditions and in the manner prescribed for the citizens of the Republic of Serbia. Primary education is mandatory and free, whereas secondary education is free but not mandatory.

The integration of children and youth into the school system is a central component of any migrant integration policy, greatly enhancing the prospect of successful absorption into the host country's society for current and future generations. The school system often provides the initial official encounter between a community and its migrant population and between migrants and local authorities, thereby playing a crucial role in the integration process.

It is therefore vital that the school system in the host country employ appropriate strategies and tools in the integration process. These need not require major changes. Often, minor policy adjustments can go a long way toward the acquisition of language and language proficiency by migrant children and, subsequently, toward social and cultural integration.

Successful integration into the formal and informal school system has been shown to reduce the economic and social marginalization of migrants and to provide opportunities for social mobility. For migrant youth, in particular, the education system of the host country can provide specialized vocational training programs which will enable a relatively smooth transition into the job market.

The best results in migrant integration are achieved through a multi-cultural approach that espouses values of tolerance and accep-

tance. Although not without faults, such an approach enables mutual respect, openness and enrichment among different groups. Multicultural education is a tool that provides equal opportunity for children from varying ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds. Such education aspires to provide children with the ability to function in a democratic, pluralistic society by freeing them from the constraints of their ethnic and cultural boundaries.

Preparing the School System

In order to provide access to education for migrant children, schools must prepare themselves on several fronts: organizational, scholastic, social and cultural. Determining goals and standards for each of these areas, adopting practical tools to implement them and working on all fronts in tandem will result in the best possible integration of migrant children.

1. **Organizational-Administrative Preparation:** Schools should adopt operational standards that reflect the multi-cultural makeup of their student body. This includes training the teaching staff and familiarizing them with relevant migrant cultures, initiating and maintaining contact with the children's families and communities, translating announcements and other documents into the migrants' languages.
2. **Scholastic Aspects:** Where necessary, schools should seek to narrow the gap between the schooling level of migrant and local children. This requires mapping the academic levels of the new pupils, designing personal programs for each according to his or her level and helping them learn the local language. Migrant school children should be given special allowances – tests suited to their level or additional time to complete tests and assignments, oral tests rather than written ones, one-on-one meetings with teachers and parents in order to assess progress and address impediments.
3. **Social Aspects:** Schools should actively advance the social integration of the newcomers and raise awareness of issues relating to migrant integration. These activities can include announcements regarding the arrival of migrant children, programs that stress the importance of respect for other cul-

tures, involvement of the new children in various school activities in order to promote their sense of belonging.

4. Cultural Aspects: Schools should seek to advance concepts of multi-culturalism and democracy, both as they pertain to the school itself and to the community and state. This can be achieved by exposing students to the culture and lands of their migrant classmates and facilitating multi-cultural encounters and events where migrant children can present the customs and ceremonies of their countries of origin.

Schools should design assessment tools for each of these areas in order to determine whether their goals have been achieved. The assessment process should measure the learning curve of the school in preparing for the arrival of migrant children and the tools and resources required to achieve unmet goals in the future.

Multi-Cultural Education

Theoretically, all the countries in the world are today multi-cultural, meaning their societies consist of various groups, each with its unique characteristics. The multi-cultural approach takes a positive view of cultural diversity and difference. However, not all countries adopt multi-cultural norms that reflect sensitivity to these differences.

In the context of the school system, a multi-cultural curriculum must meet two criteria:

- a. Studies should not be too narrow, or too broad. The ideal curriculum will acquaint children with the salient points of the subject matter and encourage them to learn the rest on their own, thereby developing their intellectual capacity, curiosity, independent thinking, sensitivity to other ways of life, awareness of different sets of beliefs, etc.

One such a curriculum, developed in the United States for history studies, teaches children about Western as well as Eastern civilizations – about the city-states in Greece, for example, the Sung Dynasty in China and the ancient Mauryan civilization in India. The goal of the program is to impart knowledge not only about the development of Western culture, with which the children are more familiar, but also about the context of

its development compared to other parts of the world. Such programs are designed to arouse curiosity and awareness of the similarities and differences among members of the human race.

- b. Including the study of different cultures, religions and faiths is not the only pre-requisite for a multi-cultural curriculum. Children must be engaged in a fruitful dialogue and encouraged to develop different narratives. This is the best way to ensure that they understand the complexity of situations and are exposed to varying interpretation of events.

For example, historic events and processes, such as slavery and colonialism, the industrial revolution, civil wars, should not be taught in a one-dimensional way. Each of these events and processes was experienced in different ways by different people and should be presented to children through differing narratives in order to make them understand the various aspects of the same event.

Multi-cultural education promotes values of a liberal society, with a rich, tolerant and pluralistic culture. It is the opposite of a system that promotes ethno-centric values and strengthens one group at the expense of others.

Studies conducted in Ireland, for example, have found that inter-cultural education benefits all children, both native-born and migrant. It awakens their curiosity about cultural and social differences, helps develop their imagination, helps develop critical thinking by enabling children to gain perspective on their cultural practices, develops sensitivity and contributes to mitigating racism.

Tools of a Multi-Cultural Education

A multi-cultural approach should be reflected in school curricula, in their physical and social environment, in the didactics, in student assessment and in the conduct of the teaching staff.

Curriculum: Text material and tests should be adapted for use by diverse populations. A multi-cultural school should encourage migrant children to preserve their native language, while helping them improve proficiency in the language of their new country.

Physical Surroundings: Signs posted in public areas should include the native tongues of migrant children, official school letters should be translated into languages relevant to migrant students and their families, the library should include dictionaries and books in languages with which the migrant students are familiar, and schools should aspire to employ native speakers of the migrant children's languages.

Social Environment: Schools should encourage social interaction at extra-curricular activities, mutual visits to the homes of migrant and local students, integration of migrants in school activity, partnering of native and newcomer pupils and nurturing an ongoing dialogue between all groups in the school as a way of life.

Didactics: A key element in enabling the integration of migrant students is promoting awareness among teaching staff of the difficulties faced by the children in writing and speaking. An emphasis should be placed on language instruction, preferably in small groups or even on an individual basis. Texts should be taught on various levels and children should be allowed to use dictionaries and supplemental material.

Testing: For the first year in their new school, migrant children should be allowed to take oral rather than written tests and allotted extra time for various tasks. If possible, tests should be translated into the children's native tongue. The use of dictionaries should be allowed during tests and exam questions should provide migrant children with options from which to choose. Mentors can serve as useful supplemental help for students in preparing assignments and studying for tests.

Empowering Teachers: Teachers should be trained in a multi-cultural approach to instruction and exposed to migrant children's cultures. It is important that multi-cultural schools hire high quality teachers, especially trained to work with migrant populations and children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Avoiding Segregation of Migrant Children

Where migrant housing is highly segregated, neighborhood schools will also be segregated, usually in the disadvantaged quarters of a city. Since peers play an important part in school achievement and socialization, school segregation hinders achievement and integration and should be avoided by all means possible.

Segregation occurs within schools, as well, when a large share of migrant children is placed together in classes offering a lower level of education, together with native-born children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Research shows that bright children from migrant backgrounds are routinely placed in classes for children with poor abilities, solely because of language or information gaps.

It is therefore important that during the school enrolment process, each student undergo an assessment of his or her potential and abilities in order to integrate them at the appropriate level and in a suitable class or group.

Some schools regard migrant children as a unique group to be taught in a separate framework within the school, rather than integrated immediately into regular classes. In most cases, this is a temporary arrangement, separating migrant children from other children in order to give them special attention in accordance with their needs. This system can enable children to attend some lessons along with their peers until they are fully included in the class.

Some schools group migrant children together for several school years according to their competence level in the language of instruction.

Grouping migrant children in classes which are more adapted to their needs and abilities can enable them to succeed and boost their self-confidence. This method allows them to advance at their own pace in a safe environment, but should only be considered as an interim measure, prior to the children's integration in regular classes.

It may be advisable, in certain cases, to keep migrant children an additional year in elementary school in order to allow them to improve their performance before moving on to middle school or high school.

Language Acquisition

Language barriers often prevent migrant children from realizing their potential and integrating socially in a successful manner. On the other hand, children are generally quick to absorb language.

In terms of biological development, language acquisition is easiest up to the age of nine. At a young age children are also motivated to blend into their surroundings and are less concerned than adults about making mistakes when they speak, being generally less inhibited.

Many countries grapple with the crucial question of how to teach migrants a new language and how to develop their language proficiency. Broadly speaking, there are four main methods used in industrialized countries to teach migrant children the language of their host country:

- a. English as a second language: students receive several hours a day of language instruction (English for immigrants to the United States or the local languages for migrants in other countries) in a separate class.
- b. Bilingual programs: students start out at their new school in their native language and gradually move to learning the subject matter in their newly acquired language.
- c. Immersion programs: children start out learning all subjects in their new language and acquire the language through the subject matter, in the course of time.
- d. Two-way programs: children are placed in heterogenic classes, composed of native and non-native speakers, and the subject matter is taught equally in both languages. This has the advantage of teaching a second language to native-born pupils.

The PISA Study (Program for International Student Assessment) conducted in some 70 countries has found three types of immersion programs:

1. Immersion without specific language support: students are “immersed” in the language of instruction within mainstream classrooms.
2. Immersion with systematic language support: Students are taught in a regular classroom, but receive specified periods of instruction aimed at increasing proficiency in the language of instruction over a period of time.
3. Immersion with a preparatory phase: Students participate in a preparatory program before making the transition to regular classes.

The most common approach found in primary and secondary schools is immersion with systematic language support. It is also the one that has been shown to result in relatively small achievement gaps between migrant and native students.

These are some steps that have been found highly effective in Israel and other countries in promoting language acquisition and proficiency among migrant children:

- a. Providing a long-term, ongoing support framework to help children acquire fluency. Where possible, children should receive as many supplementary instruction hours as possible, preferably in small groups, in coordination with their regular teachers and in conjunction with the regular curriculum.
- b. Remedial Education: This is one of the most effective instruments for helping children improve their academic level and grades. However, schools should refrain from pulling migrant children out of their classes during regular school hours for remedial tuition so as not to impede their integration and progress in the class.
- c. Retention of Children's Native Tongue: A review of literature from OECD member states has found that migrants entering the labour market with second-tongue and mother-tongue fluency, bring measurable economic and socio-cultural benefits to the host country, especially when knowledge of their mother language is coupled with knowledge and networks in their countries of origin.

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The project is funded by the European Union through the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia