



**Good Practice Guide  
on the Integration of Refugees  
in the European Union**

**VOCATIONAL TRAINING**



# Acknowledgements

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**The six Good Practice Guides which make up this publication are as follows:**

Good Practice Guide on Community and Cultural Integration for Refugees

Good Practice Guide on Housing for Refugees

Good Practice Guide on Health for Refugees

Good Practice Guide on Education for Refugees

**Good Practice Guide on Vocational Training for Refugees**

Good Practice Guide on Employment for Refugees



France Terre d'Asile

# Good Practice Guide on Vocational Training for Refugees in the European Union

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# Introduction Vocational training as a tool for integration of refugees

## Introductory remarks

Studies have revealed the process of that integration of refugees often leads to downward professional mobility in the country of asylum. Refugees often only have access to jobs subsidised by the State and/or requiring a lower level of qualifications or skills. Furthermore, refugees face specific problems linked to their lack of language skills and to their need for stability and security. The potential contribution of refugees to European society is substantial, but the majority of this potential remains untapped due to poor provision of advice, guidance and training which is partly responsible for the high rate of unemployment among the refugee population. The need to address the high rate of unemployment amongst refugees, by providing knowledge and qualifications appropriate to their new economic environment is our concern.

Vocational training is often the way to meet the need of refugees to update or transfer their skills to the particular situation of the labour market in the host country and, wherever possible, to gain nationally recognised qualifications. There is a consensus on the need to emphasise the importance of vocational training for refugees especially as a tool for either re-qualification or updating of skills, or familiarisation with the work environment in order to increase refugees' 'employability'. We cannot disassociate employment and vocational training. In fact, vocational training is above all a tool for getting access to employment which is in turn a key element of refugee integration. Vocational training has also a great role to play with regard to refugee empowerment. By developing new skills, it enables refugees to be active in their own integration. Vocational training is then an active way to demonstrate their will of becoming integrated into this new environment.

The situation in Europe is very diverse. It is therefore quite complex and ambitious to discuss the role of vocational training in refugee integration in Europe. The aim of this good practice guide is not to judge or to evaluate specific projects but to give an idea of some positive practices used by different organisations and bodies in Europe in the field of vocational training which are based upon innovative approaches, involve good philosophy and principles, and which do not depend entirely on a specific national context, and therefore could be in some cases transferred or reproduced in other European countries. Another objective of this guide is to make specific recommendations to the various actors

involved in the field of vocational training for refugees. They are meant to give an idea of the direction to follow in order to contribute to the amelioration of the access, quality and efficiency of vocational training in the case of the specific public with which we are concerned. We hope that this 'guide' will provide practitioners with some elements to plan effective vocational training programmes that will contribute to the achievement of professional integration of refugees in European countries.

This guide is divided into different sections that analyse vocational training from three perspectives. The first section examines the ways to improve the access of refugees to vocational training programmes. The second section deals with the organisation of vocational training programmes and examines what can be the most efficient ways of organising vocational training programmes. The third section focuses on how to improve the links between vocational training and employment.

Before entering into the heart of the subject the following paragraphs will provide some information about the methodology we used and a brief overview of the problem which will be dealt with in the guide.

## Methodology

### **The NGO perspective**

As our main concern was to collect information about vocational training programmes for refugees, the first step of the research consisted in designing questionnaires. A first questionnaire was sent to all the agencies running a pilot project funded by the European Commission under Budget line B3-4113. These questionnaires were mainly intended to discover new vocational training and refugee economic integration ideas and methods. After the data collection, a selection of the most interesting projects was made. To gain a more in depth knowledge of the projects we tried to visit as many projects as possible mentioned in this 'good practice guide'.

It should be remarked that through our research we came across other types of projects funded by sources other than the EU Budget line B3-4113. This is why some projects funded by other European programmes or national funds will be mentioned in this guide. Some of the selected projects are not specifically designed for refugees but for migrants or unemployed people at large. They have been chosen for their interesting approach in favour of the integration of refugees. However, the projects have been selected according to the information the various organisations and bodies we contacted provided us with and we did not often have access to a proper evaluation of the projects.

A second questionnaire which was more general and dealt with the institutional and legal framework was sent to one contact person in each country considered as being an 'expert' in vocational training for refugees. This 'expert' had been recommended to us for his/her experience and especially for his knowledge of vocational training for refugees. Since it is very hard to disassociate employment and vocational training these two themes being intimately linked, the British Refugee Council and France Terre d'Asile decided to run a common expert meeting. European employment and vocational training experts were gathered in Paris in the offices of France Terre d'Asile (28<sup>th</sup>-29th May, 1998).

These experts enlightened us about the training programmes offered to refugees in their respective countries. They also gave us valuable information about the legal and socio-economic framework of vocational training in their countries which allowed us to better understand the national variation and specificity. Another source of reflection and information was the specific workshops on vocational training held during the Conference on Integration of refugees in Europe, organised by the ECRE Task Force, (Antwerp 12-14 November 1998). During these workshops, practitioners expressed their points of view on subjects such as: individual career guidance, the link between education, training and employment or on the importance of work placements as a link between vocational training and employment<sup>66</sup>.

### **The refugee perception<sup>67</sup>**

As the lead agency on refugee vocational training in the ECRE Task Force on Integration France Terre d'Asile invited refugees from across Europe to take part in a panel discussion on Vocational Training. This panel discussion took place in Dalfsen, the Netherlands, (1<sup>st</sup> -2<sup>nd</sup> July 1999). 15 refugees gathered from all over Europe who either had experience of the vocational training system in their country of asylum (i.e they had followed a vocational training programme) or were involved in the vocational training sector as practitioners (being teachers, involved in vocational guidance etc...).

On this occasion, researchers learned from the refugees themselves about their perception of the existing provision in the field of vocational training and tried together to make some recommendations with the aim of improving the situation leading to better integration.

The other part of this "Refugee perception" work is based on 150 refugee interviews arranged in the 15 European Union countries in which refugees were asked to talk about their experience of integration in their country of asylum.

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66 The report of the conference on integration of refugees in Europe, Antwerp 12-14 Novembre 1998 is available on the ECRE Task Force on Integration website: [www.refugeenet.org](http://www.refugeenet.org)

67 For more explanation see General Introduction to Good Practice Guides

Some of the quotations we will use in this guide come from these interviews and from the Refugee Vocational Training Panel in Dalfsen.

Various reports have been produced during these two years of research about refugee vocational training.<sup>68</sup>

## **Background to the theme:** Elements for a definition of vocational training

Vocational training can be defined as the acquisition of new skills in order to obtain employment (this includes acquiring the necessary language skills for the relevant profession)

### Initial and continuing vocational training

Vocational training is usually divided in two : initial vocational training and continuing vocational training.

Initial Vocational Training concerns training which is directed at the acquisition and development of the knowledge and skills required for specific employment and which leads to a recognised qualification. Continuing Vocational Training is lifelong training which encompasses all organised and institutionalised processes following initial vocational training, and which is designed to enable individuals to adapt to technological and technical changes, and to encourage their social development.

Vocational Training is differentiated from academic training; however, the border is not always easy to define. *The time factor* can be a criterion to make a distinction between these two types of qualifications, vocational training being shorter in time. For example, a chemical engineer originally from Russia, following a period without any professional activities would need to adapt to new technologies. This type of re-qualification should be seen as vocational training whereas a degree in engineering is an academic qualification.

### Refugee vocational training

Given the specific needs of refugees talking about refugee vocational training encompasses a wider scope than the traditional definition. Language as well as vocational guidance conditions the access to and the success of vocational training and must therefore be analysed as part of the vocational training process.

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<sup>68</sup> “Seminar on Vocational Training and Employment of Refugees in Europe”, jointly with the British Refugee Council (Paris: May 1998), Report of “European Commission Conference on Integration of Refugees”: (Brussels: November 1997), Refugees and vocational training in Europe – An analysis of the ECRE Task Force on Integration (January 1999), Report from the Refugee Panel vocational working group Working Group (Dalfsen, Netherlands: July 1999)



Our definition of vocational training includes activities designed to prepare refugees to enter a vocational training programme (vocational guidance and language training often called pre-vocational training) as well as post vocational training : follow-up preparing people to get access to the labour market (job-search skills, intercultural relations in a working environment or confidence building modules).

As will be developed further on, a comprehensive approach to vocational training programmes seems to be the best way to achieve effective results.

- **Programmes should be established to support refugees in developing flexible training and labour market participation targets. These should consist of pre-vocational training courses, labour market orientation, career advice and the development of job search skills.**<sup>69</sup>

International and European provision in the field of vocational training:

#### **At an international level**

- *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (10/12/48) in its article 26 concerning education includes a statement about the need to make technical and professional training available.

*“Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary school and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit”*

#### **At European Union level**

- At a EU level there is recognition of the importance of vocational training in order to be able to face technological changes and to fight against exclusion.  
But in the field of vocational training, the role of the European Union remains limited since the Member States are responsible for the organisation and content of training.  
Nevertheless the Leonardo da Vinci programme for the implementation of a community vocational training policy was adopted in December 1994 (for a period of five years). This programme seeks the improvement of the quality of vocational training systems and their capacity for innovation and envisages vocational training as a key factor in combating unemployment and exclusion.
- The Maastricht treaty, while introducing for the first time provisions on education policy, is also significant for stressing the fact that the EU should limit its activities to supporting the national policies of the members,

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69 See Appendix 2 : ECRE Position on the integration of refugees in Europe, para : 77

whereas the progressive implementation of a common vocational training policy was envisaged in the past. This more qualified vocational training policy pursues several goals such as:

- To facilitate access to vocational training
  - To improve initial and continuing vocational training in order **to promote integration and reintegration in to the labour market or**
  - To encourage **co-operation in the field of training between educational or training bodies and companies.**
- *The CEDEFOP* (the European centre for the development of vocational training) was established in 1975 by the EC with the remit to “assist the Commission in encouraging at a community level, the promotion and development of vocational training and continuing training.” CEDEFOP web site - [<http://www.cedefop.gr>] - provides information and contacts regarding vocational training in Europe and is a good tool for finding partners for projects at a European level.

## Key actors in vocational training

### **The key actors concerned with refugee vocational training are:**

- government agencies and employment agencies
- refugee assisting NGOs and refugee community organisations providing training and advice services
- vocational training centres

### **And to a lesser extent,**

- Trade Unions
- Employers

### *Government agencies and employment agencies*

Employment agencies should play a key role concerning information and orientation services for refugees, though in reality this is rarely the case. Civil servants are generally speaking not sufficiently trained to deal with migrants and refugees to provide them with services consistent with their situation.

### *The role of the Non Governmental Organisations*

NGOs, whether being community based or not, play a key role in facilitating refugee access to information about vocational training programmes and career guidance. Apart from the mainstream programmes accessible to anybody, NGOs give the opportunity to refugees to have access to specific programmes that take into account their specific needs, especially concerning language training and vocational guidance services.

### *Vocational training centres*

Mainstream training providers can also provide specific training for migrants and/or refugees. These specific training programmes are generally initiated by governmental bodies or NGO agencies. Some refugees succeed later on in integrating into a mainstream programme. In spite of their professionalism the trainers are not always prepared to deal with this specific population, they lack experience and need to be trained to work in a multicultural environment and to cope with the refugee reality. Some refugee assisting NGOs develop close partnerships with vocational training centres, which can be a good way to deal with this problem in order to make them aware of the specific needs of refugees.

### *The private sector*

The involvement of the private sector in refugee training and integration is still very low in Europe whereas their involvement could be a way to improve the link between vocational training and access to employment. However, in some European countries the profit sector seems to be more involved than in others. Scandinavian countries as well as the Netherlands also seem to be very active in creating a synergy between NGOs, local governments and companies. In France, some NGOs are very eager to develop links with national and local employers in order to find work placements for refugees during training programmes.

### *Trade Unions*

Trade Unions act in a few countries as providers of vocational training programmes, mainly in southern Europe especially, in Spain, Greece and Italy. This is due to the national economic and political circumstances in these countries: trade unions' intervention often arises from the lack of initiatives for refugee integration taken at the governmental level. The role of trade unions in such cases is not only to organise vocational training projects but also to make companies aware of the need for refugees to be integrated.

## Section 1: Improving the access of refugees to vocational training

### Introduction

This Good Practice Guide deals with refugee integration; it concerns recognised refugees. Nevertheless it is important to point out that in our view, integration should begin before the actual recognition of refugee status.

*“I escaped from the war raging in my country and I arrived here and I was not allowed to do anything but waiting and thinking of how miserable I was. I was feeling like an observer; I couldn’t understand the language or whatever. This is just not human to leave people unoccupied like this”. (Refugee Vocational Training Panel)*

Due to the duration of the waiting period for being granted refugee status in many countries, asylum seekers should be granted work permits after a certain period of time and have access to vocational training programmes. This is already true in some European countries such as in the UK where many asylum seekers have access to vocational training and employment after a waiting period of six months. Some other European countries grant a restricted permission to work and consequently to access vocational training (Spain, the Netherlands, Greece, Germany and Belgium) (see Employment Guide, Section 1).

**Given the impact of the reception phase on long-term refugee integration or return prospects, basic training provision should be made available to asylum seekers as soon as they submit their application. Such training should focus on the development of skills or knowledge which could be equally useful in the case of settlement in the host country, preparation for return and reintegration in the country of origin or resettlement in a third country.**<sup>70</sup>

Asylum seekers’ access to language and vocational training is also a way to avoid mental health problems caused by inactivity. In the South of Holland, the school of the Wereldwijd Foundation gives special attention to asylum seekers’ socio-educational support as a way to prevent mental health problems. Forced to live in exile and socially isolated in the host country, asylum seekers can be considered as a group that runs a high risk of developing mental health problems. In this school language and vocational training are seen as a way for asylum seekers to regain self-confidence by being able to perform a new skill. Wereldwijd work in co-operation with the public mental health services that sees this as a preventive action. ( See Health Guide, Section 3)

Before talking specifically about access to vocational training we would like to stress an important point that was underlined by the refugee participants of the Refugee Panels in Dalfsen. Social conditions of living, daily problems such as housing or health problems are major obstacles for refugees to effectively access vocational training. In some parts of Europe mainly in southern countries, ***the creation of a better social welfare framework in order to allow refugees to attend courses and to be able to get access to proper employment is a priority.***

Once a satisfactory level of living conditions has been reached, access to vocational training programmes depends to a large extent on the availability of information and vocational/career guidance.

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70 See Appendix 2 : ECRE Position on the integration of refugees in Europe, para : 80

The lack of recognition of diplomas and past work experience has a direct impact on the extremely important role of vocational guidance services. Vocational guidance will often have to find solutions to overcome this first barrier. Another way to strive for a better access by refugees to vocational training is to set up frameworks for an effective partnership between different practitioners.

## A. Access to information

Dealing with access to vocational training programmes is in the first place a question of information and orientation. One of the problems we identified is linked to access to information about Vocational Training. As long as in most European countries there is no specific legal framework, **there are no specific national agencies dedicated to refugee information on Vocational Training programmes.**

Generally speaking, refugees have access to information on the same basis as nationals of the host countries. Information is spread at national, regional or municipal level *according to the political and administrative regime of the country*. Vocational training schemes take place in most cases at a local level (municipalities in Finland, Sweden, UK) or regional level (Lander in Germany and Austria, Regions in Belgium, in Italy, in France). In Spain, the independent Provinces have considerable political and administrative autonomy and there is no overall policy on refugee integration and training. The system is similar in Belgium where the 6 Regional governments have considerable independent powers, hence, they experience difficulty in building any formal national policy on refugee integration.

Everywhere, besides the labour offices, NGOs play an important role concerning information for refugees on vocational training programmes. Most of the time refugees in theory have access to mainstream programmes on the same basis as nationals. Thus, mainstream structures should be able to inform refugees but civil servants from employment agencies are less experienced in dealing with migrants and refugees and providing them with the right information and services.

### The refugee service of the protestant Social Centre –CSP in Brussels - Belgium

Information and professional guidance services are an important part of the activities of this organisation which is a partner in the transnational INTO project - Refugee integration into European Society.

The CSP activities in the project are mainly focused on information services and individual guidance. Information and guidance obviously does not cover only vocational training and guidance but the main issues social workers come across every day are requests concerning education and employment in Bel-

gium. These two issues are closely linked to vocational training and the specific counselling service provided is based on questions concerning education, training, work opportunities and the legal and administrative aspects it entails.

The project also includes a “vocational integration” workshop in order to spread information about the labour market, legal terms related to labour and training possibilities. This is a way to inform a large number of people. The project is supported by the EU budget line B-4113.

☺ *By offering a personal approach the main objectives are to provide adequate information and orientation to refugees.*

### **Stepping Stones into the “New Deal”, British Refugee Council, London**

This is a programme of outreach and recruitment work to inform refugees about the New Deal, and the Job Seekers Allowance (the standard UK welfare benefit payment for the unemployed). The New Deal is a new governmental programme for the unemployed (1999).

Bilingual workers are appointed to work in the communities most affected by high unemployment. Multilingual leaflets set out factual information to encourage the unemployed to come forward. Meetings in refugee community centres and Refugee Community Organisations are set up in close liaison with the New Deal Managers from the local Employment Services.

A series of training days for New Deal Managers is followed by close liaison between the outreach workers and New Deal managers to raise awareness of refugee issues among Job Centre staff, by running courses for staff. The project:

- gives refugees an understanding of Job Seekers Allowance and New Deal opportunities
- uses the local Employment Service and Refugee Community Organisations to set up networks to inform refugees
- builds capacity by enabling refugees to access training and work through the New Deal
- raises awareness of refugee issues among Job Centre staff
- Increases the number of refugees registering for Job Seekers Allowance

☺ Strong refugee involvement in implementation

☺ Bilingual approach

☺ Outreach to refugee communities



## *Signposts to Good Practice*

- In order to facilitate the actual access to information, all countries of the European Union should set up central information offices on vocational training, which could provide complete and objective information on vocational training programmes accessible to refugees.
- Information systems and co-operation between governmental agencies and NGOs should be improved
- Civil servants from employment agencies should be trained to deal with migrants and refugees to provide better services
- Employment agencies should work more in collaboration with NGOs, supporting refugees.

### **B. Lack of recognition of academic qualifications and professional experience<sup>71</sup>**

Refugees' skills and knowledge are frequently wasted or underused because of a lack of recognition of their qualifications (academic as well as vocational) in the different Member States of the European Union. This issue has been widely developed by WUS, the lead agency for education in the Task Force on Integration, but recognition of diplomas as well as recognition of past experiences and skills are closely linked to vocational training. Vocational Training is often seen as the only way to overcome this major obstacle, as a refugee woman interviewed in France told us: *"I wanted to participate in a training course in order to have a paper from here. When you look for a job it is important, they ask you what is your background ? Sometimes they don't believe you. We left the country with nothing at all, our diplomas are lost"*. (the Refugee Interviews).

At a national level various solutions are used to try to overcome the problem of recognition of past qualifications and experience: Portugal chose not to give priority to refugees' academic degrees but rather to their professional experience. Professional certification recognises the refugee's professional experience. The advantages of this approach are obvious because the refugee moves into the job market without a degree from the country of asylum but with official recognition from the country of asylum of his/her professional skills.

In the UK, the National Vocational Qualification system (NVQ) takes past experience into account. A person can get 'credits' for a qualification as long as she is able to provide evidence. The problem is that most refugees cannot offer any evidence. The solution adopted by the NVQ system is to make a practical assessment of somebody's skills through work placements.

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<sup>71</sup> See Education Guide, Section 3

In France, the National employment agency (ANPE) through an “assessment of qualifications in a working environment” can recognise practical skills and past experience.

If, according to the above quotation, vocational training can be a way “to have a paper” from the country of asylum, this “paper” (qualification) has to be recognised to be of value. This is actually not always true and several interviewed refugees mentioned the fact that the vocational training programme they participated in had no formal accreditation and recognition at a national level.

As a refugee interviewed in Greece explained : “ *One of the reasons I didn’t find a job after the vocational training courses was that the diploma I received was not recognised by the state nor by employers and my son experienced the same thing*”. (the Refugee Interviews).



### *Signposts to Good Practice*

- There is a need at European level, for a system for recognition of previous experience and qualifications for non-EU citizens.
- There is a need to set up a European-wide set of standards to recognise previous training experience from countries of origin
- NGOs supporting refugee integration should work only with certified vocational training centres to guarantee the quality of the training programmes and the formal recognition of the training in the country

## **C. Career guidance as a way to improve the effectiveness of vocational training**

### **A definition of career guidance**

The term “career guidance” (or advice) incorporates the provision of comprehensive information advice and guidance on education, vocational training and employment opportunities. For our purpose we will focus on advice about vocational training aiming at providing access to a profession. The importance of career guidance in the field of education is dealt with in the Good Practice Guide on Education. The need for individual assessment and career guidance as a way to access further education is stressed.

### **About the importance of good career guidance for refugees**

As a result of their particular situation, refugees have specific needs in terms of individual career guidance.



As a consequence of uprooting and exile, refugees often face very specific professional integration problems. To cope with exile-related problems career guidance has to correspond to a **comprehensive programme** aimed at helping refugees, to accept their new situation and to acquire a new social identity.

An effective orientation is the only way to produce conclusive results in overcoming the obstacles surrounding the assessment of existing skills and qualifications. Refugees must be given the choice of vocational training programmes adapted to their level of experience, education and capacities, and to opportunities in the job market. The effectiveness of vocational training in terms of employment depends a great deal on this initial stage. By orienting refugees to programmes that match their specific background and requirements their chance of professional integration will be greatly improved.

### **Career guidance: implementation**

The main objective of setting up individual career guidance for recognised refugees is to strengthen their capacity to get a job corresponding to a coherent and viable professional objective. This professional objective should be in tune with the aptitude of the refugee and take into account the constraints and opportunities of the social and economic environment in the country of asylum. In order to fulfil this main objective, individual career guidance should be based on three intermediate steps:

1. A personal assessment of the capacities and interests of the refugee, which may be taken into account in professional integration. The individual must be aware of his strengths and weaknesses. Self-respect is a key element in order to be able to be more confident towards employers in a professional context.
2. A professional assessment of the competencies and know-how acquired through educational background, qualification or professional experience. This assessment may be based on psychological/technical/ professional tests organised in work-like situations.
3. An introduction to the labour market situation and employment opportunities, as well as information on the possibilities for further qualification (academic and vocational), included in this process should also be the acquisition of techniques of job seeking and communication.

Another objective of vocational guidance is to provide a better understanding of the functioning of the labour market and of the education and training system.

### ***When ?***

The sooner the refugee can benefit from career guidance services the better. It will give him “a plan of action” which is a good incentive to take a proactive step in the new environment.

### **“Da assistiti a risorse”-CIR, Rome, Italy**

The ‘vocational counselling’ activities conducted by CIR within the pilot project ‘da assistiti a risorse’- “The assisted as human resources” - aims at helping refugees to get oriented within the complex Italian labour context. The role of the counsellor is then to give refugees a better understanding of mechanisms in the Italian context and stimulate them to plan their career on the basis of realistic employment opportunities. This project is supported by EU budget line B3-4113.

### **Arbeitassistentz für Migrantinnen, ISOP – Austria**

Labour support for migrants- was commissioned by the labour exchange for the Austrian district of Styria. This project co-funded by ESF (European Social Fund) aims at improving the chances of foreigners to access vocational training and the labour market. Arbeitsassistentz für Migrantinnen offers vocational guidance, job assistance as well as training. Great attention is given to information about the job market and about the vocational training system in Austria. Vocational orientation and vocational training are provided as well as active job search support. (See Employment Guide, Section 2,C)

☺ The innovative aspect of the project resides in the interaction of three factors: the preparation of a vocational training or a work placement and the co-operation with external qualification centres and companies to give an adequate qualification to participants.

### **The Newcomers Integration Act, Dutch Government, the Netherlands**

The Integration of Newcomers Act (so called WIN -Wet inburgering nieuwkomers-) came into force in the Netherlands in 30 September 1998. The aim of this compulsory governmental programme is to promote the independence of newcomers by means of an integration programme based on an integration contract. Not specifically targeted at refugees this programme can nevertheless benefit refugees’ integration. WIN consists of training in the Dutch language, social orientation and vocational orientation.

Within four months after applying for the integration programme the newcomer is required to enrol at an educational institution with which the municipality has concluded a contract. The new comer signs a *training contract* with this vocational training institution. The course consists of Dutch as a second language (Nederlands als tweede taal –NT2), social orientation (Maatschappij-oriëntatie-MO) and Vocational orientation (Beroepenoriëntatie-BO) (See Employment Guide, Section 6,B and Education Guide, Section 2,A).

- ☺ *This programme is still new and thus hard to evaluate.*
- ☺ *Nevertheless it can be seen as good practice in several ways. It provides an early orientation to newcomers in a comprehensive approach to integration, taking into account both social, language and vocational needs. This is an innovative approach in Europe based on a contractual relation between the newcomer and the administration of the host society.*
- ☺ *This programme shows the willingness of the Dutch government to consider integration of newcomers as a priority.*
- ☹ *The compulsory and coercive side of the programme is very much open to criticism . Integration cannot be forced and must be a two way process.*
- ☹ *Newcomers cannot be seen as an homogenous group. Some newcomers may not need to follow the programme and would be ready to enter the labour market by themselves.*
- ☹ *There is no guarantee that municipalities provide good services. There is a lack of evaluation criteria for the training centres involved in the programme.*

### Vocational guidance, University of Glasgow - the UK

The project supported by the Leonardo Da Vinci programme focused on vocational guidance . The project includes a telephone help line with the possibility of advice in some community languages. This help line called 'learning direct' provides access to a team of expert advisers for information on getting the right skills for a job, the latest employment opportunities and courses provided by colleges or refugee community organisations.

Moreover **Glasgow Adult Guidance Network** has been created with the specific remit to improve access to information and the quality of information, advice and guidance offered to clients about jobs, courses and qualifications. Membership of the network is open to all agencies offering education, training or employment information, advice or guidance, and to education and training providers.

- ☺ *A telephone help line is transferable anywhere and is a good solution for an easily accessible first information and orientation.*
- ☺ *Another positive aspect of this project is that the advice is given if possible in the native language of the person which is of major importance when addressing newcomers' needs.*
- ☹ *If a telephone line can be good for a first contact it is certainly not a proper way to make a real definition of a viable professional or educational project. Further services have to be provided.*

### Itinerario project, ENAIP-Centro di Servizi Formativi, Bologna – Italy

Through the “portfolio of competencies techniques” in the framework of the Itinerario project a more in depth orientation is provided. The project consists of a personal competence evaluation in order to identify professional objectives taking into account the interests and the past experience of the trainees. Participants are mostly refugees housed in accommodation centres. The outcome of the evaluation can be either a further training or an orientation to the job market. Job search support is then provided.

☺ The technique of “the portfolio of competencies” is a good orientation technique implemented in order to give autonomy to the trainees. It consists of a personal file presenting the professional background and integrating almost any professional and personal experiences. This technique is a global approach to the individual, which proves particularly motivating in the case of refugees. Since they are often disconnected from their past it is a good way to integrate their whole life into the elaboration of a professional objective.

☺ In Europe more and more vocational training centres use this technique.

### **The Training and Employment Section (TES) of the British Refugee Council (previously known as Refugee Training and Employment Centre/ RTEC) , London, the UK**

TES is a major provider of vocational guidance and vocational training for refugees and asylum seekers in London. It offers a complete range of services intended to reduce the obstacles to training and employment of refugees and asylum seekers. Amongst other things TES provides two interesting career guidance services:

- The confidential drop-in advice service: *TES careers Advisers assess the value of previous qualifications and experience, help the ‘client’ choose between employment, training and further study and give information about opportunities across London.*
- A person willing to have a deeper orientation can take part in a ‘Plan for action’ workshop. **Plan for action Workshop is a one week full time orientation course aiming at helping the ‘clients’ to elaborate their professional project**

“ Many of the people whom we see have very little idea of the training, educational or labour market in the UK. They might have years of experience of work at home, but here it is different. So we provide them with information to help them make a decision about their future... To get a job, you have to be realistic about what you might be able to achieve” (Plan for action tutor).

Plan for action seminar-content:

- The first step is an introduction to the labour market. Through introducing the participants to the local

labour market the tutor underlines the need for asylum seekers and refugees to make a sort of 'self-review' in order to get prepared for training and employment. A point is made about the current characteristics and trends of the labour market and a discussion is opened on the implications for personal training and employment plans.

- A language skill evaluation is carried out through an individual interview with the ESOL (English as a Second Language) tutor.
- A self-assessment of skills, work experience and personal qualities help the participant to define a professional objective and a plan for action.

Afterwards, according to their needs participants are oriented towards vocational training organised by TES itself or by other vocational training centres under the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) system.

- ☺ *TES uses an interesting method of relying on group advice sessions which is a way of making maximum use of scarce resources and of reaching a wider audience than individual advice sessions*
- ☺ *TES provides services integrating vocational training and employment which is the best route to successful vocational training.*
- ☺ *Child-care and transport allowances are given to the participants.*

### **Vluchtelingenwerk , SVU, branch of the Dutch Refugee Council in Utrecht - The Netherlands**

The project offers refugees who have completed the settlement course the opportunity to participate in a course which aims to make them aware of their professional skills in connection with the Dutch job market. The project aims at professional education and access to the job market. The programme consists of the following parts:

- Individual counselling
- *Language and professional training*
- *Group meetings on application and presentation techniques*

At the group meetings, attention is paid to clarifying the self-image, exploring participants' strengths and weaknesses and becoming conscious of their own skills. During the training the individual counselling aims at recognising the codes and conventions of the Dutch labour market, acquiring and improving social and language skills. (See Employment Guide, Section 2,B).

- ☺ *In depth individual counselling and assessment of skills are provided.*

## Training for advisers

### **AHOI -Action and Advice for Labour Market Integration of Refugees and Migrants, an on-line Distance learning project, the Red Cross, Germany**

This project aims at training nationals as well as migrants and refugees to offer vocational guidance and at improving the quality of advice services and local infrastructures in order to integrate refugees and migrants with work permits into the labour market.

This three year project (1998-2000) aims at qualifying social workers, advisers and especially community workers in the field of vocational guidance and labour market integration. Special consideration is given to recruiting participants who are migrants or refugees and/or representatives of migrants and community organisations. (See Employment Guide, Section 2,D)

- ☺ Refugees can become career advisers themselves and can support professional integration of other refugees in their own or other communities.
- ☺ The online distance course is innovative and flexible



### *Signposts to Good Practice*

- *Individual career guidance should be set up in all European countries. This could be implemented via an informal, flexible and progressive contract between the provider and beneficiary, based on mutual trust and on the motivation of the refugee towards his/her integration.*
- *Individual assessment and specialised career guidance before, during and after completion of courses should be made available to refugees. Such assessment should take into consideration issues such as health, family situation and personal plans.*
- Individual career guidance should lead to the setting up of individual integration projects, which should be based on a competence assessment and on past experiences of the refugee, conceived as an additional asset to the host society.
- Career advisers should be trained in intercultural competence. Their training should include an in-depth understanding of refugee situations (i.e the cultural, emotional and psychological difficulties faced on a daily basis).

## **D. Partnership to improve refugee access to vocational training and employment**

The lack of co-operation between the various actors involved in the provision of vocational training for refugees is certainly one of the causes of the difficulties refugees face in accessing vocational training. To set up a framework for such an effective partnership to exist could be a way to overcome this, and to improve the synergy in this field.

### **The Refugee Training Partnership (RTP), London, the UK**

RTP is a large urban 5 year programme set up to increase training and employment opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers in inner London. It aims to do this in a way which involves refugee community organisations as active stake-holders in the process. The partnership is so named as the programme has been designed to bring together a wide number of agencies, funders and key players working across central London who are concerned with making a difference to the way both society and refugees interact, leading ultimately to increased participation of refugees in the work and life of London.

RTP is funded by the Single Regeneration Budget (local regeneration), European Social Fund (employment), London Boroughs Grants and the local Training and Enterprise Council, and, is managed by the British Refugee Council.

RTP provides training towards nationally recognised vocational qualifications in English for non-English speakers (ESOL) and open learning (Information Technology and job search skills). The training is provided by Refugee Community Organisations who are members of the partnership. Each provider must bid for a training contract and if successful is assisted to meet the highest quality standards in the performance of their contracts. So far over 80 contracts have been successfully completed.

Management of financial systems in the programme has also been designed to enable small organisations to under-take sub-contracts. Advance funding is made available to organisations with limited cash flow capacity. In addition regular financial control meetings are held with each contractor to ensure control systems are robust, and very little has been written off due to weak performance by a provider.

Training and employment outcomes are not the sole aim of the RTP. Four local training partnerships have been formed, consisting of local refugee community organisations, service providers and other agencies. Through membership of the local training partnerships, refugee community organisations can network with other local organisations to identify local problems and solutions. (For information on the further development of this project, see Employment Guide, Section 2B)

- ☺ This partnership is based on a strong refugee participation in implementation
- ☺ RTP is a way to enable participating organisations to develop the capacity and experience which is needed in order to attract funds especially European Social Fund and other structural funds
- ☺ This experience is not necessarily transferable everywhere in Europe as in many European Countries there are no well organised Refugee Community Organisations. If that is the case, such a partnership could involve refugee support organisations and service providers.

## Section 2: Organisation of vocational training programmes

There are several issues to discuss with regard to the way in which vocational training programmes should be organised. First, vocational training comes in various forms, and a comprehensive approach to vocational training schemes seems to be the most effective solution.

Second, the specificity of the problems refugees are confronted with calls for the launching of specific vocational training programmes, but this should not reinforce their marginalisation and every effort should be made to integrate refugees step by step into mainstream programmes. To do so, specific programmes should be conceived as bridges to the mainstream sector.

However, the refugee population is obviously not homogenous and some specific groups present specific needs and have great difficulties in integrating into mainstream provision.

### A. For an holistic approach to vocational training programmes

A particularly important aspect of vocational training is learning the language of the host country. It is true that not being able to speak the language of the country fluently is often the biggest handicap when job hunting or accessing a vocational training programme. In most European countries specific provision does exist in favour of refugee language training but there is a need to reduce the long waiting lists for language schools and to provide refugees with the necessary means to be able to study. The lack of differentiation in teaching methods often causes a decline in students' motivation. At the beginning, courses should be adapted to the linguistic level of the student (differential criterion); as the course progresses the professional experience and personal interest of the students should be taken into account (technical language) so that the student can learn quickly **a language which also matches job market requirements.**



Technical language courses tend to be set up in more and more countries which helps to give better chances to refugees to follow a vocational training programme.

### **INTO transnational pilot project, Sociale dienst voor Vreemdelingen (Social Service for Foreigners), Ostend- Belgium.**

Within INTO transnational project this Belgian NGO runs a language course in vocational Dutch.

As many refugees could not follow technical training because they needed specific vocational language courses, the organisation decided to run a vocational Dutch course.

This course aims at introducing refugees to vocational terminology in 6 sectors of the economy: logistical assistance in hospitals and elderly homes, professional cleaning, metal work, electricity, welding and construction.

😊 At the end of each session participants are equipped with reasonable knowledge of the basic terms to begin the vocational training they would have chosen.

### **Comprehensive programmes combining technical and language training**

Comprehensive training programmes are programmes which see the person in a global perspective and do not isolate the linguistic aspects from the technical aspects. In this perspective, one of the objectives of the Irish organisation Interact Ireland is “to demonstrate that the provision of English language training with established links into vocational training is the most efficient and effective means of delivering a quality English language training for refugees”.

Such a comprehensive approach is present in several projects and tends to be developed in Europe. We noticed two different kinds of models: The first one is based on a combination of language learning and vocational training in a progressive way, whereas the second is a work-study model based on an alternative pedagogy.

### **Interact Ireland (former Refugee Language and Training project)**

Interact Ireland developed a concept which combines language learning and vocational training in a progressive way.

Integration concerns several areas, which cannot in fact be dealt with separately. Interact Ireland's project is therefore part of a **coherent integration strategy**.

The project includes three levels of training.

- **Training Programme n 1:** introductory language courses.
- **Training Programme n 2:** intensive language courses (work-related vocabulary), and professional training in the hotel business. Some refugees can also begin at a higher level in the training programme depending on their professional experience and their original academic degree.
- **Training Programme n 3:** refugees take part in vocational mainstream training programmes open to any participants and, in the best of cases, find a job.

The transition towards integration in the national culture occurs based on a constructive evolution that drives refugees to full integration.

☺ This combined model, both flexible and evolving, offers hope and is very promising : it could be transferred to other countries in Europe.

☺ Training in a company is part of the programme

### **“Language and job training courses” , Oldenzaal municipality, the Netherlands**

This is a Work-study programme funded by the Employment Initiative of the European Social Fund.

The target group (the long term unemployed new immigrants and newcomers) are trained to improve their command of the language. In particular the language spoken at work which is known to be lacking. Another important goal is the improvement of their knowledge of Dutch labour market requirements. Participants are carefully selected as are the companies and their coaches on the spot. Skills obtained in the past as well as current needs and future possibilities of the Dutch employment market which are of importance when looking for a training course.

During 3 months, the trainees attend a programme consisting of one-day schooling and a minimum of 3 days training with a company.

☺ Such a project allowing socially excluded sectors of the population to have a practical contact with companies is transferable everywhere in Europe.

☺ This type of practice raises employers' awareness about refugee professional capacities which is an important factor of integration.

## Linguistic and technical platforms , the French Ministry for employment and solidarity

This recent (less than two years) and innovative initiative is targeted at low skilled people. The participants are mainly migrants and refugees. The main objective is, after elaboration of a professional plan, to provide the students with a good language level and at the same time to give them technical skills to enter the labour market.

- ☺ The main innovation is the use of an alternative pedagogy. The students alternate linguistic training and technical training and training in a company. This alternative pedagogy is considered to be highly motivating by the participants themselves.
- ☺ Social support is provided by social workers who help solve peripheral problems that can obstruct the success of the training
- ☺ Special attention is given to the vocational guidance phase in order to carefully define a viable professional plan for the individual. The national employment agency (ANPE) is responsible for this phase.

## The Social Welfare Office of the city of Neuss - Germany

This governmental agency ran an integration project called 'Integration Irakischer Flüchtling' benefiting Iraqi refugees (who were experiencing a high rate of unemployment in this municipality). Based on an innovative path, this project aims at helping them to integrate into the local labour market. Two groups of 15 Iraqi refugees were trained for one year. In cooperation with the local adult education services, the Social Welfare department's project trained the participants over a six month period followed by a traineeship in a local company of another six months which proved a good way to improve their language skills. Throughout the year participants are offered integration aids through counselling and orientation classes.

- ☺ The project provided a combination of guidance, language learning and practical training in a company preparing the participants to enter further vocational training or to start looking for employment
- ☺ This training project also includes a community and cultural aspect: the participants and their families took part in leisure activities called '**cultural exchanges**' on a regular basis. Cultural differences between home country and host country were discussed. Participants were able to express their difficulties when trying to adapt to this new environment.



### *Signposts to Good Practice*

- There should be greater differentiation in the language teaching methods according to professional

experience and personal interest of the student; so that the student can quickly learn a language that is useful for the job market.

- Training programmes should not isolate linguistic from technical aspects; technical language courses should be promoted.
- Programmes combining language courses, vocational training, work placement and job search support should be encouraged

It is possible to go even further than combining technical and language training with a more comprehensive effort to achieve integration. **Practical and theoretical courses, training in companies and language courses must all be inter-linked.** This comprehensive approach gives refugees a renewed motivation that is reinforced by the combination of work and study.

*“ When you go in a company you can practice the language and you get to know the people, the mentality, it is better than just sitting in a class room. Both are useful and it is good to do both”. (Refugee Vocational Training Panel)*

**An alternative pedagogy combining work placements and schooling is seen as the most efficient form of training.** It gives a chance to get used to the system and to have contact with local people.

In addition, the objective of vocational training is not in itself the acquisition of knowledge but the preparation of the trainee for the labour market. After the vocational training programme is ended, a follow-up should be organised in order the help the trainee make use of his new skills in the labour market.

The following project gives a perfect example of a comprehensive approach which has proved its effectiveness in terms of employment integration of the participants.

### **“Verein Projekt Integrationshaus”, Vienna, Austria**

From January 1996 to June 1998 the project gave (on behalf of the Public Employment service) the opportunity to non German native speakers to participate in courses of orientation and vocational training and a course on employment search. In total, 138 persons from 28 different countries and from very diverse training and educational backgrounds, attended the courses.

The programme was conceived to meet participant needs and according to their level. Two models:

- For a person who needed more guidance on the labour market and vocational skills 18 week long orientation and vocational training courses (Berufsorientierungskurse) were offered.
- For those searching for work in areas where they already had training or experience but who needed support in job search techniques, a 12 week-long model of employment job search course (Berufsführungskurse) was developed

The common aim of both models is to bring participants a decisive step closer to integration into the Austrian labour market, whether through attending further training courses or through looking for employment immediately after the course.

German language classes of 9 hours per week accompanied the whole course except during the period of “on-the-job-training”. Besides basic grammar lessons and incorporation of specialised job terminology for the relevant job groups, the course focuses on everyday language skills.

Another positive point is that a 6 week-long “on-the-job-training” enables the participants to reflect over their future career and to determine whether their qualification is already sufficient or not and it gives them an idea of the way to cope with reality in a working environment.

post-course attendance was also part of the programme. Twice a week, former course participants could take part in workshops where they had the opportunity to improve their job search skills. In addition, instructors offered individual counselling.

(For other aspects of this project, see also Education Guide, Section 1,B; Housing Guide, Section 2,B and Employment Guide, Section 2,C).

- ☺ The evaluation shows, a high rate of labour integration after attending the courses (71% of the participants found employment)
- ☺ This project provides a complete programme with a comprehensive approach integrating language needs, vocational training, job search skills course and post training support.
- ☺ 57% of the participants were women and special attention was given to their specific needs



### *Signposts to Good Practice*

- **In the final analysis, a work-study combination must be the underlying principle behind refugees' economic integration.**

- **Practical courses, theoretical courses, training in a company (“on-the-job training”) and language courses should all be inter-linked**
- **Vocational training programmes should include job search techniques modules on how to apply for a job and how to learn interview skills; post-training support should also always be provided after a vocational training programme as a way to turn training into professional integration.**

## B. Bridge building to mainstream vocational training

The debate about whether vocational training programmes should be specific programmes or if refugees should be integrated to mainstream programmes is a key one. The discussions at the Refugee Vocational Training panel showed that refugees themselves want “*To be more in the mainstream sector to be seen as a person first and as a refugee second*” (A refugee women living in London, Refugee Vocational Training Panel).

Nevertheless the specificity of their needs calls for specific vocational training programmes (e.g. technical language training), but everything has to be done to integrate them into mainstream programmes as soon as possible.

Specific needs are especially present at the beginning of the integration process<sup>72</sup>, during the adaptation period. It is specifically during this period that bridges need to be built to permit a successful access to mainstream programmes.

“The aim is to allow refugees to join the mainstream training by meeting their specific needs at the beginning and not disregarding their special problems, past experience and their needs to learn according to their background and real needs. Even though many refugees do not like to be individualised as a group and reject the stigma of belonging to the refugee population, there is a need for an adaptation period” (A representative from Interact Ireland).

Specific Vocational Training actions for refugees need to be set up / maintained as bridges to mainstream national and European programmes. Such bridges can be built through pre-vocational training programmes. The main objective of pre-vocational training is to provide refugee trainees with the appropriate skills for learning, seeking employment and/or interacting in the workplace.

<sup>72</sup> See Community and Culture Guide, Section 1

**Interact Ireland also runs pre-vocational training courses in partnership with the Refugee Agency, FAS (the Irish Training and Employment Authority), the Centre for Language and Communication (Trinity College, Dublin), the Bosnian Community Development Project and the Irish Refugee Council.**

The aim of the project is to promote the integration of refugees into Irish society, by providing participants with the necessary language support to enter and successfully complete pre-vocational training leading to mainstream training courses and employment in an English-speaking environment.

*“For language training it is usually specific for refugees and, after that there are pre-vocational courses to prepare you to enter mainstream training. Thanks to these pre-vocational courses you are able to get the basic knowledge in any specific field. After that you can enter a mainstream programme. Where I am doing computer training we are only two foreigners out of 24 participants”. (A refugee living in Ireland who followed Interact Ireland prevocational training programme, Refugee Vocational Training Panel ).*

The project was perceived as a means of planning and delivering language training that would be clearly focused on vocational training and access to the labour market. **A six-month pre-vocational training course has been developed at the FAS Training Centre**, under the guidance of the Centre for Language and Communication studies in Trinity College, Dublin. The course introduces participants to basic information technology, and provides focused English language training as well as work placements. Modules on employment skills are also included, such as preparation of a Curriculum Vitae, interview skills and job applications.

On completion of the pre-vocational training course, participants are assisted to identify their own individual career path and to apply for further mainstream FAS training. 87% of participants in the period March 1997 to March 1998 are now in full-time employment, mainstream training or are currently awaiting training places.

- ☺ This project is a co-operation between governmental and non governmental agencies
- ☺ It is based on a comprehensive approach including technical language training, basic knowledge courses, career guidance and work placement.
- ☺ Each participant is encouraged to develop the learning tools and self-awareness, which will ensure that future learning will also be successful.
- ☺ It is transferable and not limited to a specific national context

## Bridge building for adults immigrants and refugees, The Royal Danish School of Educational studies in co-operation with the Danish Institute for Educational Training of Vocational Teachers.

This project consists of the implementation of the bridge building course which focuses on creating a bridge between language schools for adult foreigners and technical mainstream schools. There is in fact quite a change to bridge from a language school for adult foreigners to a technical college dominated by young Danes.

The bridge building combines counselling and teaching. The main objectives of the course are for participants to:

1. Get acquainted with the vocational school environment and with various vocational training opportunities.
2. Acquire the basic professional skills to be able to start vocational training.

At this “bridging” stage the students need technical language as well as daily spoken language which means quite intensive work. This means that language school teachers and vocational school teachers must work in close co-operation.

- ☺ When gathering people with different backgrounds and qualifications it is of importance to differentiate the teaching. A differentiation of the teaching methods means that the teaching method is individualised and students must work at a more independent level. Individualised teaching means that more effort must be put into developing the student's independent working methods. This is a good preparation for the next step: the vocational training itself.
- ☺ Bridge building courses could be integrated into language school programmes and based on a close co-operation with vocational training centres. Such initiatives are a good way of avoiding competencies and time being wasted because of a lack of coherence and co-ordination between training structures.

### *Signposts to Good Practice*

- Specific vocational training programmes for refugees should be seen as a tool to prepare them to integrate into mainstream programmes
- Refugees should be entitled to access mainstream vocational training as soon as they reach a certain level of competence in the national language.
- Special attention should be given to pre-vocational training courses giving the refugees the appropriate skills for further learning, seeking employment and interacting in the work place.



## C. Specific programmes for specific needs

However, for more specific groups of persons facing particular difficulties in their integration, specific programmes can be preferable. This point particularly concerns refugee women for whom traditional and/or religious constraints have to be taken into consideration. Traumatized people are also in a situation where they may need specific support, a factor which makes their immediate integration into mainstream programmes difficult. Unfortunately, many examples demonstrate that mainstream policies seldom benefit vulnerable parts of the refugee population.

### **About the specific needs of refugee women**

We decided to focus attention on actions targeting refugee women, because refugee women accumulate factors of exclusion : as women they are already a more socially vulnerable group and as women refugees they bring with them the weight of certain cultural and traditional factors and in the country of asylum often face discrimination and racism. Education and training are central to the settlement needs of refugee women and have important implications for their social and personal well-being in the host country. On the other hand, the barriers leading to social exclusion of refugee women are so huge that they can only be removed by a strong will and determination at every level to create an inclusive society rather than an exclusive one<sup>73</sup>.

The World University Service (WUS) in London pays special attention to the education of refugee women and identified the main barriers they face in getting access to training. Some major barriers refugee women face are the lack of language skills, the lack of recognition of overseas qualifications but more specific are **the lack of suitable and affordable childcare facilities and problems linked to isolation and culturally-related problems such as the gender role in their community.**

The lack of childcare provision in training programmes is a major barrier to refugee women's access to training programmes. "It is very difficult for a woman with children to study, in Spain it is very difficult to find child care. So refugee women have to face both cultural barriers and practical barriers" (Refugee Vocational Training Panel).

One of the conclusions of the Refugee Vocational Training Panel stressed the need to act in favour of an improvement in childcare provision.

Some NGOs try to find solutions to this major problem but means are needed.

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<sup>73</sup> Conclusion of the Refugee outreach advice project presentation by the World University Service.

For the Refugee Women's Association (RWA) also based in London, childcare provision is a must in any training or project. But this has direct budgetary consequences as childcare provision has to be included in the budget of any training programmes they conceive.

*"This is a very high single item in the projects that funders seldom take into account. Refugee women don't have the support of their family. This need is not taken into account within our system; things have to change." (RWA Outreach adviser – Target conference, North London University – February 1999)*

Moreover, the isolated situation of some refugee women – caused by the particular role they may have within their community, placing restrictions on their participation in public life- made their access to information and advice even more difficult than for refugees in general.

Concerning the content of vocational training programmes for refugee women, the objective should be to help women shift from their traditional activities to the labour market through exploiting their traditional skills. This does not mean that women can only cook, sew or take care of the children but that traditional activities can be used as a bridge toward integration. This is especially true for less educated women.

### **The Refugee Outreach Advice Project (ROAP), World University Service, London, the UK**

ROAP is an answer to the specific needs in information and advice for refugee women and disabled refugees offering them a specialist outreach advice service. It concentrates on areas of training, education, immigration and welfare advice.

A professional adviser from RETAS visits them **at their home** and/or in their refugee community organisations.

- Through this project RETAS take its services to those refugees who are isolated and unable to obtain easy access to the advice and information they need

### **Customised training in child care project, Refugee Womens' Association in collaboration with Hackney Community College, London, the UK**

Ending in December 1999, the project (funded by ESF Objective 2 and the London Borough Grants) aims

to enable refugee women in Hackney to enter the specific labour market as trained child care and nursery workers, and nursery staff whilst providing child care services to encourage other refugee women to enter the labour market. The project started in September 1998 and will be completed at the end of December 1999. The Child Care Customised Training is accredited by the Pre- School Learning Alliance.

The project will be finalised by a conference in November/December 1999

- ☺ The course content is very comprehensive including English language support, child care, training, work experience, and portfolio building and interview skills. At the end of the training the students gain recognised certificates (NVQ2 qualifications)
- ☺ An important element is that child care and travel expenses allowances are provided. A network of employers welcoming the women for a training period has also been set-up.

### **“ Economic integration of refugee women” , France Terre d’Asile**

The main goal of the project (supported by EU budget line B3-4113) is to promote the professional integration of refugee women through providing specific vocational training programmes and through an individual orientation towards mainstream vocational training when possible. It aims at helping them find employment around the areas in which they live, so as to avoid family dislocation, as well as assuring their integration at a local level.

Five vocational training fields were selected, based on the type of job opportunities offered by the French labour market. About a hundred women were selected. Selection criteria were based both on language skills and the social situation of individuals. Refugee women had to be long-term unemployed and/or beneficiaries of the minimum welfare benefit (RMI).

Schooling along with practical training within companies were available in: Health and Social Services, Industrial Cleaning, Sewing and Sales Services (cashier, etc.) According to existing laws forbidding asylum seekers to get access to training and employment, the project dealt with recognised refugee women and not asylum seekers. The training programme was worked-out in co-operation with the vocational training centres where the women were trained. The training duration varied depending on the policies of the schools or training centres.

- ☺ Close co-operation with various training centres has been initiated thanks to this project.
- ☺ Social support of the women was part of the programme: mainly child care, transportation and housing problems

☺ The French NGO did its utmost to take advantage of the various financial supports available in the mainstream sector for socially excluded people. This heavy administrative work was eased by a fruitful co-operation with the National Employment Agency (ANPE). Thanks to co-funding, the organisation multiplied by three the amount of training hours and was able to provide remuneration during the training period (which definitely enhanced participants' motivation compared to non remunerated training programmes).

### **The Susret Encounter Project, “Artists and Bosnian Refugees”- Austria**

This project provided a 12 months training in the production of textiles for Bosnian women. The description of this original and interesting project mixing training, Art and access to employment is further developed in Community and Culture Guide and the health guide. We nevertheless wanted to mention it as a good practice in vocational training as it combined refugee womens' traditional and artistic skills. Furthermore, the trained women did not have work permits and the project manager successfully made strong representations to the Austrian authorities with the result that the women receive a regular work permit at the end of the project.

### **“Socio-economic integration of refugees receiving protection on humanitarian grounds in Greece by promoting their self-reliance”, the Greek Council for Refugees**

Part of this project was dedicated to providing refugee women with vocational training in sewing. This speciality was selected as a sector in demand according to the Chamber of Commerce and as an area of employment which can also be attractive to women wishing to work at home. For cultural reasons or because of a complete loss of self-confidence refugee women often express their wish to have an income-generating activity without working outside of their home.

- ☺ The project included the possibility for the trainees to get a grant to buy professional material to be able to start their own economic activity (e.g. purchase a sewing machine).
- ☹ This type of initiative should be based on a proper evaluation and individual assessment and completed with a self-employment course.

### *Signposts to Good Practice*

- Special attention should be paid to the training needs of refugee women
- Any training programme targeting women should provide child care provision

### **Specific training needs of disabled refugees**

Disabled refugees suffer from isolation. In addition to integration barriers faced by any refugee and the difficulties all disabled people meet in access to public services they find themselves in a new cultural environment with different cultural perceptions of disability. They have often lost the support of their family and feel themselves to be more than ever a real burden to their community already struggling for acceptance in the host country. Access to information and guidance is a real problem. The need for specific provisions does not seem to be recognised since very few training projects are targeted at the disabled refugee population.

However, some organisations, conscious of these needs act to improve the training in favour of disabled refugees. This is the case in Denmark

#### **Integration of disabled immigrants and refugees, The Centre for Development of Education and Training for migrants and refugees (UVI) – Denmark**

At language schools, adult refugees and migrants receive language instruction as well as courses dealing with the Danish social and cultural systems. In connection with the language schools, a specially trained corps of teachers offers participants educational and vocational guidance. Multimedia teaching materials have been developed combining text, picture and sound and used as an interactive teaching process. The innovative aspect of the project consists in making use of expertise in teaching the disabled, working with them in the field of guidance combined with expertise in teaching migrants and refugees.

Guidelines for co-operation between the two systems were developed in order to improve the quality of training and advice services for disabled refugees and immigrants. UVI also runs courses for teachers and counsellors on how to use methods and materials in teaching immigrants and refugees with various disabilities. In addition to national funding, the Centre for Development of Adults' Education and Training for migrants and refugees is financially supported by EU programmes such as Socrates, Leonardo Da Vinci and the European Social Fund.

## **Section 3: Improving the link between vocational training and employment<sup>74</sup>**

### **Introduction**

<sup>74</sup> See Employment Guide, Section 6

Given the situation of the labour market, vocational training is not a guarantee of access to employment. There is unfortunately no direct relationship between training and employment and many refugees stay unemployed in spite of vocational training.

The depressed state of the labour market is far from being the only explanation for the high unemployment rate among the refugee population. Discrimination, racism and the fear of cultural differences are major elements in explaining the unemployment of refugees; even anti-discrimination laws often cannot prevent these problems occurring in practice<sup>75</sup>.

The question is therefore : how can vocational training be a real step toward professional integration and how can it help to overcome the various barriers obstructing refugee access to labour market?

We have already stressed the importance of work placements during vocational training as a way to improve the chances of professional integration.

Another important element is to strive for more involvement of employers and trade unions in refugee vocational training in order to improve training efficiency in terms of effective employment.

Self employment can also be seen as a way to overcome discrimination and barriers to the labour market but this means the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge. Training programmes supporting self-employment have to be seen as a good practice.

Another way is to promote vocational training programmes designed to make the most of the specific competencies of refugees, that recognise refugees as an enriching factor.

A creative approach in the definition of the fields of training can contribute to integrating refugees in an alternative sphere of the economy and even contribute to refugee empowerment.

## **A. Increasing the involvement of employers and trade unions in refugee vocational training**

Training centres as well as NGOs involved in vocational training targeted at refugees should do their utmost to improve the involvement of employers and trade unions.

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75 Projects dealing with anti-discrimination and equal opportunities are presented in the Employment Guide, Section 5)

This involvement should begin at the very first stages of the elaboration of the training programmes. The lack of correlation between training and the actual needs of the labour market is perceived as a key explanation of the low effectiveness of many vocational training programmes in terms of employment.

Therefore it is important to involve employers in the development of vocational training programmes. Employers know better than anyone else the skills which are needed in the job market. Some vocational training centres do work in close co-operation with professional federations and some NGO involved in training actions do have contact with companies.

In France, as mentioned in the Employment Guide with the example of the “employment charters”, France Terre d’Asile is very active in developing links with employers. A pilot training project was set-up in co-operation with a major catering company, CFR (Centre Français de Restauration). For three months refugees were trained by the company in several jobs. This gave them practical experience as well as a recommendation from a French employer. This type of action is going to be further developed by the organisation and combined with training programmes provided in certified vocational training centres. Creating specific links with employers has obviously a great impact on their awareness of refugee issues.

Similarly, the people teaching in the training programmes should be professionals sent by the companies. In Greece, the OAED (National Employment Agency) has a group of people specially trained to meet the specific needs of refugees. They do their best to meet the expectations of refugees.

The second step in the co-operation with employers consists in providing work placements within the training scheme. Whilst everybody agrees on the importance of practical work experience in a company as part of any vocational training, the problem is that it is not always easy for refugees to find such a work placement and refugees are often confronted with racist and discriminatory behaviour.

*“Even finding a job placement can be very hard sometimes when your name sounds strange”* (A refugee living in Sweden, Refugee Vocational Training Panel).

*“They agreed to take me for a placement because they work frequently with the vocational training centre I was studying in but when the manager of the shop saw that I was a black she told she would never have accepted it”* (A Refugee women interviewed in France, the Refugee Interviews)

As the last quote shows, the contacts and networks developed by vocational training centres and by refugee supporting NGOs with employers are a good way to overcome this problem.

In the UK work experience placements are considered to be crucial: these tackle the problem of refugees not having references and also give them a chance to show their skills and to increase their confidence. In general there is a need to promote the potential of refugees to raise public awareness.

The British Refugee Council's Training and Employment section (TES), a major training provider for refugees in London, provides Work Based Training for adults (a government-funded vocational training programme supported by the European Social Fund) in various sectors. Every training programme does include practical work experience with a British employer<sup>76</sup>



### *Signposts to Good Practice*

- In order for vocational training to actually lead to employment, it is necessary to strengthen the involvement of private companies and to focus on identified economic sectors responding to the real needs of the labour market.
- Partnerships with private companies should be encouraged in order to aid the assessment of the present and future needs of the labour market. Companies should be involved in the development of vocational training programmes and should offer practical work placements.

In addition, trainers themselves have a key role to play to advocate for refugees and they should also consider themselves as mediators towards employment.

#### **Project SAM SAM, CLP, Paris – France**

SAM-SAM transnational project is supported by INTEGRA. It deals with mediation to employment. The project is managed by the French organisation CLP (Comité de Liaison pour la promotion des migrants et publics en difficultés d'insertion). A Dutch, a Spanish and an Irish partner are involved in the project.

The objective of this project is to lead trainers to have a different approach with companies and to develop their action as mediators with employers.

This role of mediation is not specific to refugees but concerns any trainer working especially with people with a low level of qualification. Nevertheless, the existing discrimination towards refugees underlines the need to promote this kind of method in favour of refugees.

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76 See Employment Guide, Section 6



A traditional approach to training takes into account the trainees themselves without considering the possibility of influencing their environment and specifically the employers. This is a traditional way of training which upholds the view that the simple fact of training someone will automatically result in them finding employment. This is rather theoretical and does not reflect reality which is different; in fact positive action needs to be made leading towards the job offer.

The perfect place for such an action is when the trainees are at the work place. But, usually the trainer who comes to visit his trainee in a company plays a role of technical control, checking the progress of the person and his integration capacity. The concept of mediation with employers implies going further than this limited role.

Here are two ways of doing so:

**1. “Advocacy with employers”** consists of directly supporting the trainee in order to positively influence the employer. This individual advocacy is of vital importance to overcome certain barriers linked to discrimination. Nevertheless, jobs are not always available in companies and the role of the trainer could be, here, to convince the tutor to become a mentor for his trainee even after the training period is over. The mentor is an individual coach who preferably has many contacts and would be ready to use these contacts to benefit the trainee.

**Mediation** with employers goes further than this and brings about a considerable evolution in the description of the trainer’s profession.

**2. A role of prospector and negotiator with employers** Other than being present in the company in support of the trainee, the objective, here, is to lead the trainer to benefit from his/her visit and take a proactive step. The trainer’s role becomes that of a negotiator.

The trainer will look for economic information (e.g. about the evolution of the sector of activity of the company), evaluate job opportunities in order to exploit them, before the national employment agency is contacted. And discuss with the company about the organisation of the work and the job descriptions. The objective is to lobby in favour of less qualified people, and to fight against the tendency to over evaluate the required qualifications for certain jobs.

This can be described as an investigation and commercial function designed to anticipate the needs. The Dutch partners in the project call the mediator the “JOB HUNTER” which reveals the almost commercial aspect of the role.

**In other words the Mediator must have the aptitude of belonging to both worlds, the world of train-**

ing on the one hand and the world of the companies on the second hand. (See Employment Guide, Section 3A)

- ☺ An innovative way to approach a trainer's function
- ☺ Could be developed by training centres everywhere in Europe

### *Signposts to Good Practice*

- Training centres working with refugees have a role to play in awareness raising amongst employers. They should also be actively involved in work placement research in favour of refugees.
- Trainers should be trained to be able to act as mediators to employment

## Concerning the role of Trade Unions

very few Trade Unions are involved in refugee integration projects and this is even more true when talking about vocational training programmes. The involvement of Trade Unions in an issue such as refugee integration depends on national contexts and is linked to the organisation of the national labour market.

However, in Italy and Spain, Trade Unions are particularly involved in the defence of refugees' interests. The British Refugee Council in the Employment Guide gives an overview of the situation in these two southern countries and their Trades Unions' involvement in social action programmes. We will therefore focus here on the specific involvement of Trade Unions in these same countries in vocational training for refugees.

### **The Union General de Trabajadores' (UGT - Workers general union ) migrations department, Spain**

The migration department of this Spanish Trade Union acts in favour of labour integration of migrants and refugees. From December 1997 to November 1998, through its "Social and labour integration of refugees living in the autonomous region of Aragon", the Trade Union ran a pre-labour or occupational training.

The project consisted of courses in accordance with the needs of the labour market, as well as training for an active search for employment and when necessary, a compensatory training focused on courses of Spanish language and culture.

Through assessment and guidance some of the candidates were sent to more specialised training centres

- ☺ This Trade Union works in co-operation with other Non-Governmental Organisations which also work in the refugee field and with various certified training centres
- ☺ A comprehensive approach combining language, training, and other integration topics like housing, health and legal issues.

### **Training programmes, Confederacion Sindical de Comisiones Obreras, Spanish Trade Union**

This Trade Union is involved in training for immigrants and refugee. Even if the target group is not specifically refugees but rather economic migrants, refugees can benefit from the services provided. Moreover some of the practices used with immigrants to promote their social and professional integration could be transferred to refugees without difficulty.

The Trade Union provides a large range of services and training:

- Language training
- Vocational training in various economic sectors
- A scholarship programme allowing immigrants to participate in some more specific and more expensive courses.
- An individual orientation according to both professional expectations of the candidates and the reality of the labour market (existing job offers, sectors in growth)
- Mediation courses for volunteers working in the Centres of Information for immigrant workers (Centros de Informacion a trabajadores migrantes – CITE )

- ☺ A comprehensive approach including social and legal support with training and employment support
- ☺ Some of the programmes prioritise women

### **Enfab-Abruzzo – Italian Trade Union**

The Italian Trade Union ENFAP-ABRUZZO has training activities addressing immigrants and ethnic minorities training needs in order to achieve their labour integration. This Trade Union combines training services and health services and co-operates with German and French partners.

It should also be mentioned here that in the Netherlands, it is thanks to the mediation of Trade Unions that vocational qualifications given by the Wereldwijd Foundation following a six months vocational training course have been recognised.



## *Signposts to Good Practice*

- *Trade Unions should be encouraged (possibly by refugee assisting NGOs) to be active in refugee vocational training by providing training schemes and work placement opportunities*

### ***B. Vocational training for self-employment<sup>77</sup>***

“You must have French titles to get employment and above all you must have a very good level in French. Finding a real job is impossible for me because of that. 8 years after my arrival in France I came to the conclusion that what I have to do is to create my own business and I am thinking of opening a restaurant.” (A refugee interviewed in France, the Refugee Interviews)

Self-employment is often seen as a way to overcome the tremendous barriers impeding refugee access to the labour market in Europe. But starting a business requires specific skills and knowledge that will partly condition the success of the business.

Therefore, training is useful in both helping entrepreneurs to start their own business and during the life of the business to train them to continuously improve their management capacities.

“The failure of trained artisans in self-employment is often attributed to their lack of business skills and market knowledge. Thus, the inclusion of business management, marketing as well as skill-related functional numeracy and literacy in vocational training courses provides refugees with the means of ensuring that they can embark on viable income generating activities once they complete their training”. (Vocational training handbook, Norwegian Refugee Council, 1995 – Foreword by UNHCR)

Two types of training to support self employment are described below: **1.** Training aimed at helping refugees to start their own company covering legal and financial aspects Several non-governmental organisations in Europe provide such training programmes. **2.** Training for self employed people, once the company has already started, in accountancy, bookkeeping, management skills and business-plan development.

#### **LIA- Etnisch Ondernemen project, Antwerp, Belgium**

LIA has developed a training programme with the ‘Flemish Centre for Vocational Training for independent workers’.

<sup>77</sup> See Employment Guide, Section 4

This programme is not specifically designed for refugees however, 20% of the participants are refugees (Turkish, Moroccan, and African). The project works with already established entrepreneurs providing free, personalised training. Bookkeeping, accounts, regulations, marketing are the main topics covered. (See Employment Guide, Section 4)

### *SIGNPOSTS TO GOOD PRACTICE*

- Training which supports refugee self-employment projects should be developed prior to the start of the company as well as once the business is running .

## C. Refugees as an enriching factor for their host country

Refugees are usually criticised as being a social and economic burden coming to our “rich countries” to take advantage of the welfare state, whereas they often find themselves in a worse economic situation in the host country than in their country of origin. Once in the host country the difficulties they encounter make them feel as if they never had a life before; their past experience, their traditional knowledge and their competencies are rarely taken into account which causes frustration and makes exile even harder to bear.

This is a real waste; refugees bring a series of special qualifications and skills for the labour market, which can only benefit the host country if they have the opportunity of being integrated in the labour market. Their competencies should be regarded as an enriching factor. This integration serves both the individual and the host country.

This is why we choose here to mention vocational training projects based on the special skills and knowledge of refugees. Such projects can also influence the host society to regard refugees as a resource and no longer as a burden. This has to be considered as a form of good practice. This is also a way to promote multiculturalism in European societies.

The range of possibilities is broad : vocational training programmes on interpretation for example can be a way to give refugees the opportunity to make use of their specific language skills. A self-employment project in the field of import/export is another example. It aims at taking advantage of the individual experiences of refugees and can improve refugees’ integration capabilities.

### **Interpreters courses, Indvandreprojekter, Denmark**

The Danish Non Governmental organisation has for 11 years run **interpreter courses** for refugees.

Thanks to this training several refugees have been able to take advantage of their linguistic skills and make a living from them.

This organisation, active in the field of training for refugees and migrants, is mentioned in the Employment Guide, Section 4, A.

### **Culturenet Project run by Drivbänken/SIBCO - Sweden**

**This project** is a private sector initiative. SIBCO co-operative's role in the market is to assist Swedish companies interested in exporting their products to foreign markets.

The main objective of the project is to train selected refugees or migrants in order to create a professional group of consultants, who either individually or in a group, can generate an income through their self-owned enterprises. To this end six non-Swedish business consultants offer their unique cultural knowledge, experience and business contacts they have developed in their home country, combined with their acquired Swedish background.

Candidates were mainly selected from a group of well-educated unemployed migrants in Sweden.

- ☺ Specific cultural and language knowledge are considered an added value
- ☺ Through their self-owned company the participants generate an income and thereby they create a positive image of migrants through the creation of resources for everyone's benefit.
- ☹ Such a programme is very selective and concerns only very high skilled people

### **"Culture as a way to improve integration and employment", African Corporation, Bruges - Belgium**

The general objective of the project is to fight against the exclusion of refugees by networking and developing a methodology in which cultural elements are being integrated in economic projects in order to promote the feeling of pride in their own culture and at the same time generate a positive image of refugees and create long-term employment.

First the project offered a training course in the kitchen of a big company. Then a 'world food' catering service, BAOBAB has been developed creating long-term employment. (See Community and Culture Guide Section 3 ,A for this and similar projects)

- ☺ This project was actually a co-operation between 4 organisations working with refugees and/or migrants and with a company that agrees to train refugees. This is the type of co-operation with companies that has to be promoted.
- ☺ It is an easily transferable project in Europe since the idea of a 'world kitchen' is becoming more and more 'fashionable' in Europe.

In Sweden, The municipality of Botkyrka have been involved in a similar project under the name EU kitchen aiming at giving refugees the competence to start a catering firm and producing multicultural menus. Because of funding problem the project stopped after one year but the organisation is looking for ways to continue it.



### *SIGNPOSTS TO GOOD PRACTICE*

- Refugees past experiences and their skills should be seen as an enriching factor for their host country. Vocational training programmes going in that direction should be supported. Such programmes should be seen as a way to influence the host society to see refugees as a resource rather than a burden.

## D. For an alternative approach to vocational training programmes

As a large number of European citizens are without employment, the chances for refugees' professional integration are going from bad to worse.

“Training is only enough to provide them with employment in poorly paid jobs – in areas for which they are not trained, thus the resources and the time spent on decades of professional training become meaningless”, (Project co-ordinator of Solartech, Järfälla Communal Adult Education Centre, Sweden)

This pessimistic view demonstrates the need for project promoters to think of new areas of activities to train refugees in order to take advantage of the development of alternative sectors of activity not always covered by the traditional economy. This is true for example in the sector of environment or rural tourism development. This is also true in the field of intercultural mediation.

### **Pro-Badolato project, CRIC, Calabria, Southern Italy**

This local development project run by the development organisation CRIC (Centro Regionale

d'Intervento per la cooperazione) in the region of Calabria is a good example of an innovative approach mixing training, community and cultural as well as employment aspects.

Kurdish refugees were trained in iron work, pottery and other building skills in order to refurbish the declining village of Bardolata in Calabria. Another part of the refugees were trained as tourist guide leaders. The objective was to develop rural tourism and to integrate Kurdish refugees in Italian society. (See Community and Culture Guide, Section 2, E)

- ☺ Alternative tourism is a source of employment for both refugees and nationals in many parts of Europe
- ☺ Such a project helps develop a more positive image of Kurdish refugees

### **Green employment projects, Cultural Regional Centre in Courcelles – Belgium**

Another Project dealing with ecological employment (supported by INTEGRA ) was run in Belgium by the Cultural Regional centre in Courcelles –Foyer culturel de Courcelle). This project was targeted at long term unemployed people and aimed at training them for new environmental professions such as ecological tourism, environmental protection, cultural activities linked to environmental topics and so on.

### **Solartech, a training initiative of the Järfälla Communal Adult Education Centre, Järfälla Komvux, Sweden**

The aim of the project is to focus on self-employment through training in solar energy, both photovoltaic (PV) and thermal. The training is designed for long term unemployed Africans (not only for refugees but also migrants). A vocational training programme in solar technologies, as a base, and thereafter the use of the knowledge acquired for self-supporting initiatives is the essence of the whole approach. (See Employment Guide, Section 4,A)

- ☺ This project combines training for self employment with a vocational training programme outside traditional areas of economic activity.
- ☺ The area chosen is in correspondence with existing needs both in the host country and in the countries of origin
- ☺ It also provides tools for integration in Sweden and for re-integration in Africa in case of return
- ☺ This type of project would be transferable throughout Europe



### **Training for Intercultural mediation**

It is important here to mention the role that vocational training can play with regard to refugee empowerment by developing new skills for refugees to be able to be active in their own integration<sup>78</sup>.

The development of intercultural mediation service courses goes in that direction. **Intercultural mediation is a new area and training contributes to raising the professional status of the mediator.**

Training for mediators is essential in order for them to learn how to work professionally, but just as important is the formal accreditation and recognition of the training at a national level. Employment possibilities are gradually increasing and the need for such cultural mediation is becoming more and more recognised.

But mediators are often confronted with a lack of understanding about the mediator's role by service providers (hospitals, police, social services), therefore service providers themselves would need to be trained or informed to better understand the mediator's role.

### **Training for linguistic-cultural mediation - Centro Informazione e Educazione allo Sviluppo (CIES) – Rome, Italy.**

The project provides professional training to a group of refugees in order for them to act as linguistic-cultural mediators, to function as social interpreters in public institutions and reception centres. This will improve the access and use of the institutions and structures for refugees, helping to overcome the linguistic-cultural barriers that they usually face in their communication with the administration and institutions.

The organisation worked for 3 years in close collaboration with the institutions to set up this training programme in order to gain an in-depth knowledge of the real needs of the foreign population with reference to administrative services.

The course is quite complete. It includes a theoretical part (100hours) covering legal (immigration and asylum laws) and social matters as well as language and interpretation courses.

The mediators work in various sectors: health services, social security, local and regional administrations and schools.

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78 For further information on refugee empowerment, see Community and Culture Guide, Section 4 .

- ☺ Courses are given by representatives of the concerned administrations and institutions (e.g. Police, municipalities)
- ☺ Training people for linguistic and cultural mediation has both an impact on the participants by giving them a profession, and on the refugees as a whole. Mediators participate in the creation of a positive image for refugees, thus favouring refugee integration. The need for such services is becoming more and more recognised and we can hope that more and more mediators will be trained and employed in Europe.
- ☹ Most of the trained mediators have contracts of limited duration and work around 12 hours a week, which is not enough to make a living.
- ☹ Work has to be done to convince administrative services of the need to consider mediation as a real profession.



# Vocational Training



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