“Learning providers and Migration: Empowerment and Integration through Learning”

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Learning providers and Migration: Empowerment and Integration through Learning

The Working Group 3 on “Learning providers and Migration: Empowerment and Integration through Learning” is composed of 16 members representing 5 of the 6 Networks of VET-providers of our Community and is chaired by Horst Dreimann (EVBB, Secretary General).

Solidar and Sirious Network are also associated. It has met 2 times: May 2017 and March 2018 (as the other two Working Groups).

Three particular guiding principles (besides what has already been mentioned): 1) work falls within the UN Convention of Human Rights; 2) we consider migration not only as an emergency but also as a constitutive part of EU reality and 3) VET, integration into society and the labour market are the three facets of the same holistic approach to human and economic development.
Work Programme

Two fields of work for enhancing migrants’:

1. VET and Labour market participation: validation of formal and non-formal competences and learning

2. Socio-cultural integration: VET-providers’ challenges when acting as agents of integration and socio-cultural mediators; the importance of arts, sports and cultural activities.
Two Transversal Dimensions
Common to both fields

1. Acquisition of linguistic skills and communication in the language of the hosting country

2. ICT use to assess migrants’ capabilities and ICT learning to increase their employability
Sub-Group 3: Learning Providers and Migration

Themes to work on in a holistic action plan:

1. Challenges of Learning Providers concerning the validation and recognition of competences
2. Challenges in defining the preconditions enabling migrants and refugees to achieve validation successfully
3. Validation mechanisms and their capacity to respond to migrants’ and refugees’ needs (in relation to corresponding CEDEFOP work)
4. Challenges concerning the implementation of a non-segregation policy in educational institutions
Sub-Group 3: Learning Providers and Migration

5. Competences and roles of School / VET institutions’ staff as agents of integration and coordination between migrants / refugees and relevant stakeholders (local community and labor market)

6. Impact on VET institutions of managing cultural clashes and conflicts between migrants / refugees and hosting country communities
Validation: Preliminary Findings

- A critical step for migrants’ integration in learning and/or employment

- Validation to become compulsory and to precede any further measures/actions (in Sweden and Finland it is a statutory part of integration policies)

- Validation may take different forms from writing exams to observation in real work situations (i.e. catering, care sector) overcoming migrants’ lack of knowledge of the hosting country’s and sector’s language
In the case of migrants with little and scattered work experience, it is preferable to assess their potential rather than their knowledge and build a portfolio of abilities and skills.

Preparatory courses leading to VET should be combined with training for integration since one is reinforcing the other.

Validation measures including standards should be adapted to migrants’ needs and culture.

Curricula should be reconsidered and the pace of programs slowed down.
Students to be classified on the basis of their capabilities rather than age.

Coaching is important for integration in learning and life and many native people offer to act as coaches accompanying migrants through the whole process of learning and settling in their host country (i.e. in Belgium).
Socio-cultural integration: Preliminary findings

- There is need to prepare in advance local students to accept migrants in classrooms (IB-Germany)
- Compulsory classes of reception for the linguistic/cultural preparation of migrants before joining normal education (OKAN, Belgium; Germany)
- Training staff needs to be prepared on how to introduce migrants in the culture/values of the hosting country using also ICT tools to reach large numbers of trainers (AFPA, MOOC France)
- Teachers’ and social and health care personnel need to be trained in trauma recognition in migrants (Flanders, Belgium and Ubria, Italy)
- Particular attention and measures targeted to migrant women to facilitate their wellbeing and integration in the hosting country (Greece; Italy)

- Involvement of migrant associations and of students of migrant origin to provide guidance/support to newly arrived (Italy)

- Importance of intercultural mediation for building up understanding and trust between groups of people of different origin (Greece)

- Promote refugee’s empowerment through their involvement in local voluntary associations (France)