

O1 Report on refugee situation and good practice examples of policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

RefuSkills

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Table of contents

Summary	7
Scope and aim of the study	7
Brief overview on the situation of refugees in Europe	9
Conclusion and recommendations for RefuSkills.....	12
Country fiche: Austria.....	15
1 General information on refugee situation	15
1.1 Developments since 2015	15
1.2 Data on refugees	15
2 Labour market situation	15
3 Important actors	16
4 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences	16
4.1 Competence Check (Kompetenzcheck).....	16
4.2 “Erhöhung der sprachlichen Kompetenzen im Bereich der Fachsprache” (Project Antenne – Strengthening of language competences in the field of technical language) .	18
4.3 Project Logo (General Competence Check in the field of calculation).....	18
4.4 German Language Trainings – various levels	19
4.5 BBE - Kompetenzzentrum zur beruflichen Anerkennung im Ausland erworbener Qualifikationen (Competence centre for validating VET qualifications acquired abroad)	19
4.6 Qualifikationspass Wien (Qualification Pass Vienna).....	20
4.7 “Start Wien – Das Jugendcollege (Start Vienna – youth college).....	20
Country fiche: France	22
1 General information on refugee situation	22
1.1 Developments since 2015	22
1.2 Data on refugees	22
2 Labour market situation	23
3 Important actors	24
4 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences	25
4.1 Bilan de compétence (access after signing the contrat d’accueil et d’intégration, CAI)	25
4.2 French language proficiency tests: TCF, DILF, DELF, DALF	26
4.3 The recognition of diplomas of migrants.....	27
4.4 Accelair-Cosi Forum individual professional and language training for refugees (based on the refugee integration program “Accelair”).....	27
4.5 Evaluation <i>des compétences et des connaissances professionnelles</i> (ECCP) for job seekers.....	28
4.6 <i>Période d’immersion professionnelle</i> , PMSMP (former EMT).....	29
Country fiche: Germany	31
1 General information on refugee situation	31
1.1 Developments since 2015	31
1.2 Data on refugees	31
2 Labour market situation	32
3 Important actors	35

4	Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences.....	36
4.1	Interview guidelines for the identification of professional competences (<i>Interviewleitfaden zur fachlichen Kompetenzerfassung</i>).....	37
4.2	Competence tool kit – competence balancing for migrants in groups (<i>Kompetenzenkoffer – Kompetenzbilanzierung für Migranten und Migrantinnen in der Gruppe</i>).....	38
4.3	Competence panorama for migrants (<i>KompetenzenPanorama für Migrantinnen und Migranten</i>).....	39
4.4	KomBI-Laufbahnberatung.....	40
4.5	Assessment for the identification of competences for migrants (<i>Assessment der Kompetenzfeststellung für MigrantInnen</i>).....	40
4.6	Competence cards.....	41
4.7	JobFit.....	42
4.8	SIQua24 (language-integration-qualification; web aided on request; online 24 hours)	42
4.9	Competence team refugees (<i>Kompetenzteam Flüchtlinge</i>).....	43
4.10	Identifying Competences – Arriving Well in Niedersachsen (<i>Kompetenzen erkennen – gut ankommen in Niedersachsen</i>).....	44
4.11	Qualification analysis and “Prototyping Transfer – Vocational recognition based on qualification analysis”.....	44
	Country fiche: Italy.....	45
1	General information on refugee situation.....	45
1.1	Developments since 2015.....	45
1.2	Data on refugees.....	46
2	Important actors.....	46
3	Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences	48
3.1	SPRAR.....	48
3.2	INSIDE.....	49
3.3	Support by PES, COL and for recognition.....	50
	Country fiche: Norway.....	52
1	General information on refugee situation.....	52
1.1	Developments since 2015.....	52
1.2	Data on refugees.....	52
2	Labour market situation.....	52
3	Important actors.....	53
4	Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences	54
4.1	The Introduction Programme.....	54
4.2	Job Opportunity (<i>jobbsjansen</i>).....	55
4.3	Self-registration of competences (<i>Selvregistrering av kompetansee</i>).....	55
4.4	White Paper on Adult Education.....	55
4.5	NOKUT’s Qualifications Passport for Refugees.....	56
4.6	Early Work Start (<i>tidlig arbeidsstart</i>).....	57
	Country fiche: Portugal.....	58
1	General information on refugee situation.....	58
1.1	Developments since 2015.....	58

1.2 Data on refugees	58
2 Important actors	58
3 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences	60
3.1 Support programmes for students	60
3.2 Other support measures.....	61
Country fiche: Spain	63
1. General information on refugee situation	63
1.1 Developments since 2015	63
1.2 Data on refugees	63
2. Important actors	65
3 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences	66
3.1 National system for evaluating and recognising non-formally and informally acquired skills and competences.....	66
3.2 Support services.....	67
Country fiche: Turkey.....	68
1 General information on refugee situation	68
1.1 Developments since 2015	69
1.2 Data on refugees	69
2 Labour market situation	69
3 Important actors	70
4 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences	70
4.1 Support services.....	71
Bibliography	72

Summary

Scope and aim of the study

The following report brings together information gathered by desktop research and with support of RefuSkills partners on their respective countries (country fiches). Additionally, for Austria, Germany, Norway and Turkey a brief description of the labour market situation/integration of refugees was included, as these countries took in a lot of refugees since summer 2015 and have therefore been analysed in more detail. Also good practice examples of programmes and measures in Austria, Germany and Norway on identifying skills and competences are described in more detail than for the other countries, where a more general overview is presented; as most initiatives and programmes have been developed in these three countries that will have to integrate large groups of refugees into society, education and the labour market.

The following table shows a brief overview of developments since 2014 (e.g. increase of asylum applications in 2015), data on refugees (like their countries of origin) and the analysed measures and policies that have been reviewed for this report. In some countries – Austria and Germany – a lot of programmes have recently started that support refugees in order to show and recognise their skills and competences. Other countries, like Portugal or Spain, have only very limited programmes as only few refugees moved to these countries in the past years.

Table 1
Overview country profiles

Country and key characteristics	Development since 2014	Data on refugees	Measures and policies reviewed
Austria Western central European country Population: 8.5 mio. EU member since 1995	2015: 88,912 applications for asylum; increase by 212 % compared to 2014 (28,452 applications)	2015: - Afghanistan 29 % - Syria 28 % - Iraq 15 %	- Competence Check (<i>Kompetenzcheck</i>) - <i>Erhöhung der sprachlichen Kompetenzen im Bereich der Fachsprache</i> (Project Antenne – Strengthening of language competences in the field of technical language) - Project Logo (General Competence Check in the field of calculation) - German Language Trainings – various levels - <i>BBE Kompetenzzentrum zur beruflichen Anerkennung im Ausland erworbener Qualifikationen</i> (Competence centre for validating VET qualifications acquired abroad) - <i>Qualifikationspass Wien</i> (Qualification Pass Vienna) - <i>Start Wien – Das Jugendcollege</i> (Start Vienna – youth college)
France Western European country	2015: 79,914 asylum applications Sharp increase in applications:	2015: - Sudan - Syria - Kosovo - Haiti	- <i>Bilan de compétence (access after signing the contrat d'accueil et d'intégration, CAI)</i> - French language proficiency tests: TCF, DILF, DELF, DALF

Population: 66.4 mio. EU founding member	+ 64.2% Syria, + 184% Sudan, + 254% Iraq, + 349.2% Afghanistan		- The recognition of diplomas of migrants - Accelair-Cosi Forum individual professional and language training of refugees (based on the refugee integration program “ <i>Accelair</i> ”)
Germany Western central European country Population: 81.2 mio. EU founding member	2015: 441,899 2016 (January until August): 564,506 asylum applications	2015: - Syria: 158,657 - Albania: 53,805 - Kosovo: 33,427 - Afghanistan: 31,382 - Iraq: 29,784	- <i>Interviewleitfaden zur fachlichen Kompetenzerfassung</i> (Interview guidelines for the identification of professional skills and competences) - <i>Kompetenzenkoffer – Kompetenzbilanzierung für Migranten und Migrantinnen in der Gruppe</i> (competence balancing for migrants in groups) - Competence panorama for migrants (<i>KompetenzenPanorama für Migrantinnen und Migranten</i>) - <i>KomBI-Laufbahnberatung</i> - Assessment for the identification of competences for migrants (<i>Assessment der Kompetenzfeststellung für MigrantInnen</i>) - Competence cards - JobFit - Recording of competences of asylum seekers and refugees in the first reception facility (AEA) Suhl - Competence team refugees agency for work Neu-Ulm (<i>Kompetenzteam Flüchtlinge Agentur für Arbeit Neu-Ulm</i>) - SIQua24 (language-integration-qualification; web aided on request; online 24 hours) - Qualification analysis – Recognition of foreign training qualifications in case documents are missing
Italy Southern European country Population: 60.6 mio. EU founding member	2015: 118,047 refugees arrived in Italy; 83,970 requested asylum – a growth by 32 % since 2014.	2015 - Nigeria: 18,174 - Pakistan: 10,403 - Gambia: 8,022 - Senegal: 6,386 - Bangladesh: 6,056	- SPRAR - INSIDE - Support by PES, COL and for recognition
Norway Scandinavian country Population: 5.2 million EEA member since 1994	2015: 31,145 applications; number was three-times as high as the four last years; 2016 by the end of August only	2015 - Syria 10,448 - Afghanistan: 7,000 - Iraq: 3,001	- The Introduction Programme - Job Opportunity (<i>jobbsjansen</i>) - Self-registration of competences (<i>Selvregistrering av kompetansee</i>) - White Paper on Adult Education - NOKUT’s Qualifications Passport for Refugees - Early Work Start (<i>tidlig arbeidsstart</i>)

	2,248 applications		
Portugal Southern European country Population: 10.5 mio. EU member since 1986	2015: 872 2014: 442	2015 Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq	- Support programmes for students - Other support measures
Spain Southern European country Population: 46.4 mio. EU member since 1986	2015: 14,881 refugees 2014: 5,947 refugees	2015 - Syria: 5,724 - Ukraine: 3,420 - Palestine: 809	- national system for evaluating and recognising non-formally and informally acquired skills and competences - support services
Turkey Eurasian country (Anatolian/ Balkan peninsula) Population: 77.7 mio. Candidate country since 1999	2015: 2,503,409 temporary protection (for Syrians only); 2014: 1,519,286	July 2016 - Syrians: 2.7 million - Iraqis: 123,584, - Afghanis: 109,012 - Iranians: 26,947	- support services

Source: Eurostat, own representation based on country fiches

Brief overview on the situation of refugees in Europe

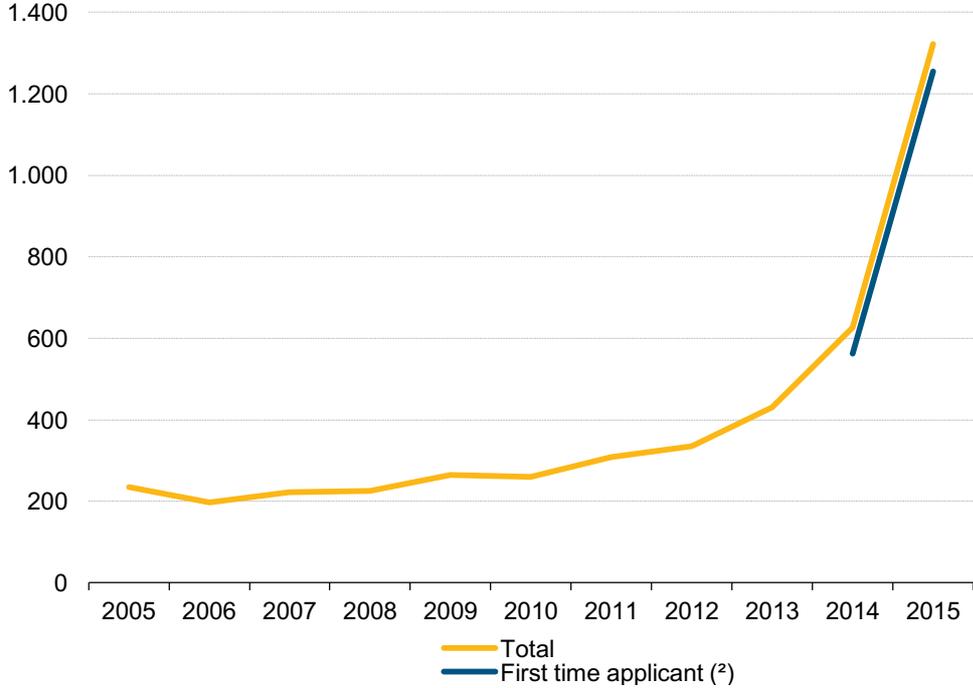
In general, three different groups can be differentiated when talking about refugees in European countries:

1. People entitled to asylum: recognised refugees in accordance with the principles of the Geneva Convention who have mostly equal status concerning labour market access as nationals or EU/EEA citizens.
2. People granted subsidiary protection: for these persons the asylum procedure ended negatively, but on the basis of the principle of *'non-refoulement'* they have a temporary residence permit. They basically have free access to the labour market and are partly treated as nationals or EU/EEA citizens.
3. Asylum seekers: are in an ongoing asylum process, that has not yet legally concluded, who have a factual deportation protection. They often have permission-based access to the labour market, the general access to the labour market differs across European countries, e.g. in Italy they generally have access whereas in Austria access is very limited and restricted (DG EMPL 2016a, 2).

According to data from Eurostat 1.3 million people (1,260,000 of them first-time asylum seekers) claimed asylum in Europe in 2015 – figure 1 shows the large increase of the last two years, starting in 2005. Many analysts agree that a huge proportion of these people will settle in Europe for good: In 2015, 52 % of asylum applications ended with a positive result, a

standard policy assumption is that at least half of this number of people will remain in Europe (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 11).

Figure 1
Asylum applications (non-EU) in the EU-28 Member States, 2005 –2015

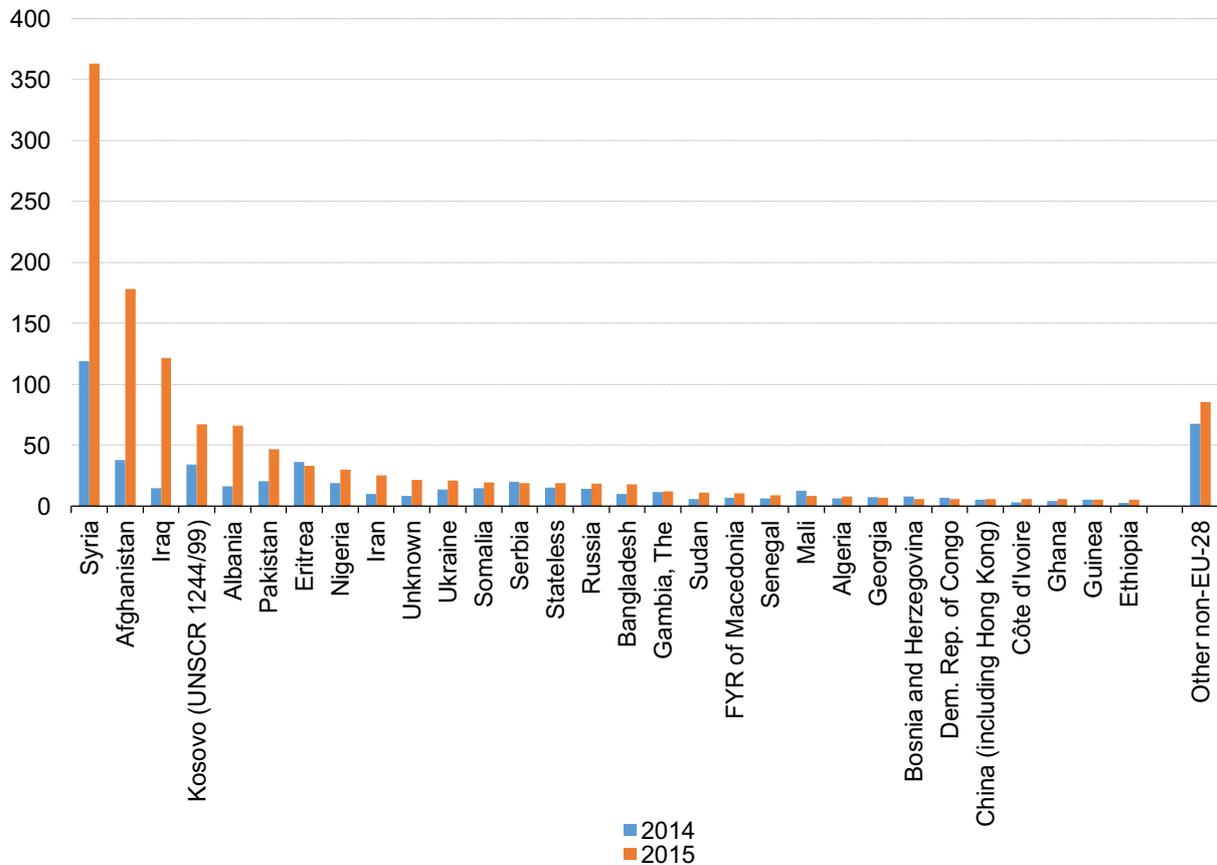


Source: Eurostat (online data codes: migr_asycetz and migr_asyappctza)

Most asylum seekers come from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq (as Figure 2 indicates). These are in general the most dominant groups in the countries analysed for this study, besides Italy, Spain and Portugal. In Italy a huge proportion of asylum seekers come from African countries, like Eritrea or Nigeria. Spain's and Portugal's geographical location is far away from the major migration routes of refugees and asylum seekers in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, and due to economic difficulties the countries are not a particularly attractive final destination for refugees and asylum seekers. In Turkey and Norway that are not included in this figure of data for the EU-28 most asylum seekers also come Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Figure 2

Countries of origin of (non-EU) asylum seekers in the EU-28 Member States, 2014 and 2015, thousands of first time applicants



Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_asyappctza)

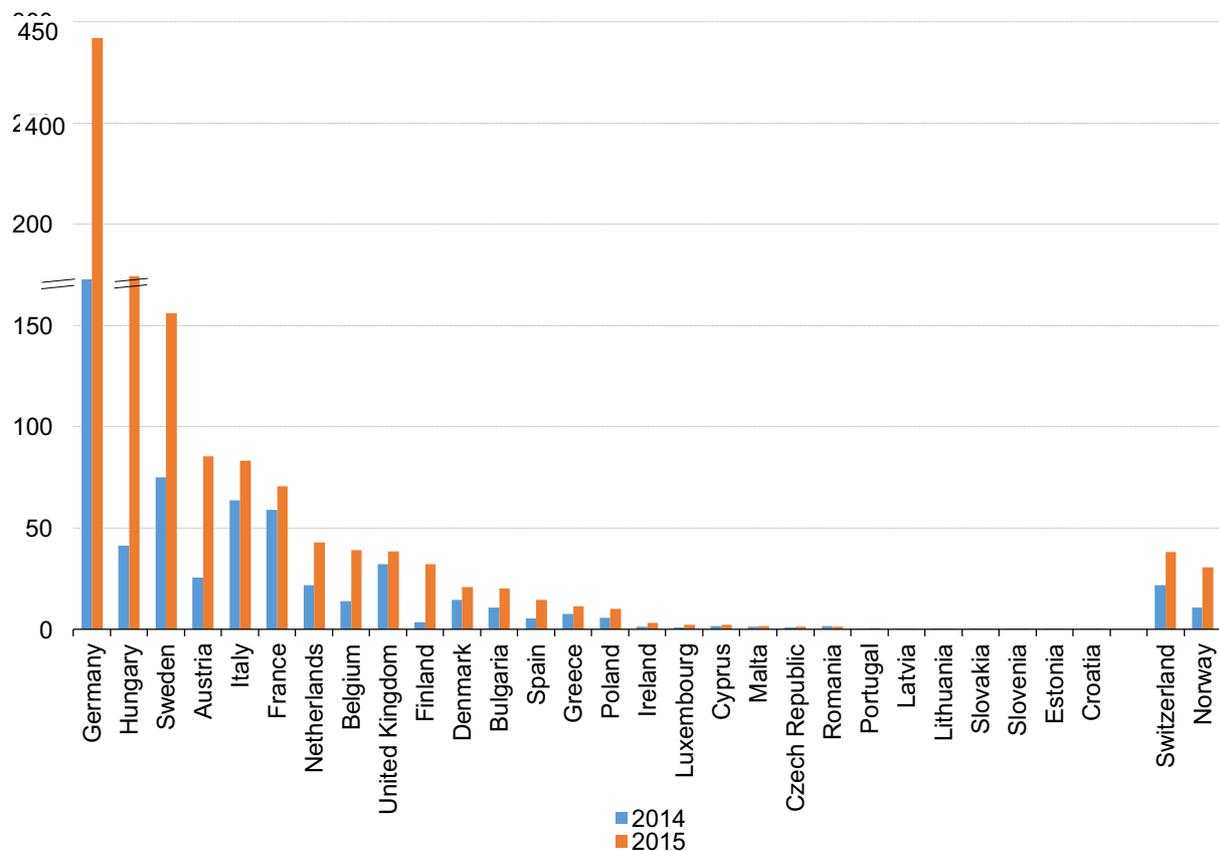
Countries (EU-28) with highest numbers of first time applicants in 2015 were Germany, Hungary, Sweden, Austria, Italy and France. Although many people filed for asylum in Hungary in 2015, not many stayed there but moved on to Austria, Germany and Sweden (mostly in autumn and winter 2015/16) as the situation in Hungary deteriorated rapidly in late August, beginning of September 2015.

Besides these numbers for the EU-28, Turkey hosts millions of Syrian refugees (2.5) and over 100,000 from each Afghanistan and Iraq.

Norway also reported a huge increase in asylum applications in 2015 (over 30,000) but the numbers are steeply declining in 2016.

Figure 3

Number of (non-EU) asylum seekers in the EU and EFTA Member States, 2014 and 2015, thousands of first time applicants



Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_asyappctza)

Conclusion and recommendations for RefuSkills

One of the main challenges for the integration of asylum seekers and recognised refugees in the society and labour market as well as for the validation of skills and competences acquired in their home countries are lacking **language skills** in the language of the hosting country. Therefore, many of the European countries hosting refugees implemented measures to provide asylum seekers and recognised refugees with language training. People receiving a refugee status – or even before as asylum seekers in some countries – are therefore offered language courses that in some countries also go hand in hand with initial language proficiency tests. In France, for example, refugees must sign a Reception and Integration Contract (*contrat d'accueil et d'intégration*, CAI) which aims at facilitating their integration into French society and is compulsory to receive personal support and a residence permit for more than one year. It gives refugees access to a language training according to their personal level of proficiency and foresees an assessment of their professional competences (*bilan des compétences*). Furthermore, for children of compulsory school age (6-16 years) the enrolment to school foresees language tests, which are used to decide about further integration measures such as e.g. additional training in French as a second language.

In Germany, the most important instruments for the labour market integration of refugees are the so called *integration courses* which comprise 600 hours of language training and 60 hours of information on German culture and politics. In addition, the so-called *vocational language courses* focus on German language knowledge for the employment context.

In Norway the *Introduction Programme* for recognised refugees also consists of “Norwegian language training and social studies” of 600 hours in order to be eligible for a permanent residence permit.

But although hosting countries support refugees (and some also asylum seekers) in order to learn their national language, it takes time for people to be proficient enough in a second language and to be able to reflect on vocational education and use specific professional terms in a foreign language.

Furthermore, the **concepts of “skills” and “competences”** may not be easily transferred or explained to people coming from a different cultural or economical background who are not familiar with these concepts and the competitive orientation of the European education and labour market systems. Also the vocational education system that is very specific in Austria and Germany has no equivalence in many of the countries of origins of the refugees; therefore, it may be difficult to find corresponding vocations or occupations as well as their accompanying skills and competences.

Thus, it can be seen as a crucial success factor of the RefuPass to be as much as possible using **visual representations** (compare for example the competence cards developed in Germany by Bertelsmann Stiftung) and **simple language**. Since many refugees may also lack English language skills it is recommended to use simple expressions and offer **several language versions** of the RefuPass including the native languages of the most important refugee groups, like **Arabic** as the official language spoken in Syria and Iraq or **Pashtu** and **Farsi** (spoken in Afghanistan and Iran).

Since the concepts of „skills“ and „competences“ are difficult to understand for asylum seekers and recognised refugees, it is recommended not to use this kind of terminology and theoretical explanations but instead to **focus on practical questions** such as „What I am able to do?“ (see German good practice example competence panorama for migrants in chapter 4.3) or “What kind of work experience did I gather in my home country?”.

Furthermore, **practical experience** provides a good opportunity for refugees to increase their self-confidence in competences they already acquired and to learn new skills and competences as well as to train their language skills. It is therefore recommended to use the **RefuPass also as a tool to identify and document competences** of recognised refugees and asylum seekers in the context of internships, volunteer work or apprenticeships.

In order to be in line with existing tools at European level it is recommended to keep in mind the **compatibility of RefuPass with the YouthPass and Europass**, but at the same time aim for a better usability of this tool by – as mentioned above – using easy language and pictures and illustrations.

Filling in the RefuPass should be part of a **guidance process** for asylum seekers and recognised refugees that aims also at the empowerment of this target group. As has been seen in analysed programmes and measures for this study, it is important to support refugees and asylum seekers during this process – by support of guidance counsellors and also translators, who help express the skills and competences.

Since almost every refugee and asylum seeker has a mobile phone and is using apps it is recommended to provide the RefuPass application as an **app for smartphones** as well. Ideally this app would provide a kind of „game“ or „quiz“ logic and deal predominantly with „visual language“. Ideally the app would be so easy to use so additional support would not be

needed, but still guidance counsellors could support this process as well by checking the filled in information and helping identify additional skills and competences.

The competence profile and tasks of professions taken into account for the project should be demonstrated also via visual representations rather than just verbal explanations (e.g. by **using videos**). Furthermore, it is recommended to take into account a broad range of professions with different education and training durations and different access pathways.

Concluding, it is recommended to put a special **focus on women** since they often do not have formal qualifications and/or documented working experience. This group should also be taken into consideration when developing new guidance programmes and measures in order to support their integration into society and the labour market.

Country fiche: Austria

1 General information on refugee situation

1.1 Developments since 2015

In 2015, 88,912 applications for asylum were submitted in Austria, 72 % by men; compared to the year 2014 this was an increase by 212 % (in 2014 28,452 applications had been submitted). In 2016, data from August 2016 show that 32,036 applications have been submitted from January to August 2016 (BMI 2016, 3; BMI 2015, 3).

1.2 Data on refugees

Concerning the country of origin, Afghanistan (29 %), Syria (28 %) and Iraq (15 %) are the main three countries of origin in 2015; all other countries had a share of less than 4 % (DG EMPL 2016a, 2). In 2016, based on data up to August, the main countries are still Afghanistan (9,709), Syria (6,427) and Iraq (2,131), but Iran (2,031), Pakistan (2,005) and Somalia, Nigeria and the Russian Federation (1,251; 1,207; 1,026) have a bigger share compared to 2015 (BMI 2016, 6).

2 Labour market situation

In Austria asylum seekers have very limited access to the labour market (recognised refugees and people with subsidiary protection have mostly equal status as Austrians or EU/EEA-citizens): During the first three months, employment is completely prohibited, after this period they can only work in agriculture or tourism and only in the case that no Austrian- or EU-citizen applies for the job. Asylum seekers between 16 and 25 years are allowed to start an apprenticeship training in professions with skilled labour shortage (like cutter, roofer or power engineer), but according to numbers from the Austrian PES (AMS) in 2015 only only 198 work permits were issued for apprenticeships (DG EMPL 2016a, 3, 7).

Recognised refugees and people with subsidiary protection can register as unemployed at the PES, receive job vacancies and job offerings and can participate in active labour market policies (ALMP). Asylum seekers are the responsibility of the Austrian provinces (*Bundesländer*) and have no access to ALMP measures (ibid.).

At the end of July 2016, 25,168 refugees (including recognised refugees and people with subsidiary protection) have been registered as unemployed. One difficulty for the Austrian labour market is that most of the refugees (66,5 %) are registered in Vienna, where the overall unemployment rate is rather high at the moment (AMS 2016, 2). In the Western provinces, where for some occupations in tourism a labour shortage can be observed, only few refugees are living.

The question of recognising qualifications as well as skills and competences is crucial for entering the labour market. A pilot project started in Vienna in 2015, *Kompetenz-Check* (Competence Check, see chapter 4.1), that is clarifying the skills profile of refugees. The pilot project was rolled out for all of Austria in 2016 and more than 11,000 competence checks should be conducted.

Recognising qualifications for refugees is often more difficult as they lack official documents that could prove their attained educational level. Several initiatives, that already started years

ago focusing on attracting skilled third country nationals, are now also used to recognise qualifications of refugees.

3 Important actors

Federal level

Ministry of the Interior (BMI): http://www.bmi.gv.at/cms/bmi/_news/bmi.aspx

Federal Office of Asylum (BFA): <http://www.bfa.gv.at/>

Ministry of Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA):

<https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/integration/>

Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF): <http://www.integrationsfonds.at/en/home/>

Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice): www.ams.or.at

Municipal level

Fonds Soziales Wien (organisation of the Viennese municipality taking care of refugees and asylum-seekers): <http://fsw.at/fluechtlinge/>

City of Vienna: Integration and Diversity

<https://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/index.html>

Wiener ArbeitnehmerInnen Förderungsfonds (WAFF): <https://www.waff.at/en/home/>

NGOs

Caritas Wien: <https://www.caritas-wien.at/>

Diakonie: <https://diakonie.at/>

Integrationshaus: <http://www.integrationshaus.at/>

Volkshilfe: <https://www.volkshilfe.at/cms/cms.php>

Red Cross/Rotes Kreuz: <http://www.rotekreuz.at/home/>

Samariterbund: <http://www.samariterbund.net/>

Beratungsstelle für Migrantinnen und Migranten: <http://www.migrant.at/sprache/english/>

Validation

AST – Anlaufstelle für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen

<http://www.anlaufstelle-erkennung.at/anlaufstellen>

Berufsanerkennung Österreich: www.berufsanerkennung.at

Eric Naric Austria - validation of higher education qualifications: www.nostrifizierung.at

4 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

4.1 Competence Check (Kompetenzcheck)

Target group:

Competence Check – Women older than 18 years: Women older than 18 years registered at the Viennese PES with an asylum status and knowledge of the Latin alphabet and who have an A1 German level;

Competence Check – Men older than 25 years: Men older than 25 years registered at the Viennese PES with an asylum status and knowledge of the Latin alphabet and who have an A1 German level;

Training duration: 5 – 7 weeks

Training targets:

- Competence check
- Professional tests (practice)
- Recognition of qualifications gained abroad
- Labour market and social inclusion and integration
- Professional orientation and career planning

Kompetenzcheck is an active labour market policy that takes 5 - 7 weeks, 11 hours per week. There are 10 hours of workshops (e.g. on the Austrian labour market, Austrian education system, how to write a CV, etc.);

1-2 hours a week of **biographical interview**: What is your mother tongue? Do you speak German? How good do you speak German? Did you go to school? Where did you go to school? For how long did you go to school? What did you learn? Do you have any certificates? Is a validation of certificates possible? Have you already worked in your country of origin? What have you worked? Description of competences the person gained?;

Description of Training during Competence Check:

- **Individual clearing** (f-2-f coaching) at the beginning of the training to collect all individual and professional data, documents, experiences, etc. (in German or in the mother tongue). **Individual coaching** (f-2-f coaching) during the whole training.
- **Evaluation “IT-Competence”**: IT-competence evaluation is based upon ECDL criteria and implemented in the first training week. For all participants
- **Professional competence check**: Evaluation of formal, informal and non-formal competences. This professional competence check is used, if a nostrification or formal professional recognition is not possible and the person would like to work in the same professional field as in the home country.

The professional competence check is a professional performance/test by the trainee at a so-called ‘Competence Expert’ (e.g. training institute or entrepreneur). The test is based on a competence, skills and experience list elaborated by the PES. After the practical test/exam the ‘Competence Expert’ has write a detailed competence evaluation report that will be send to the PES counsellor. The content of this report includes a mapping of all the skills + orientation and description of the future field of work + possibilities to find work for the person today and possibilities to find work for the person in 1 -2 years (qualifications, apprenticeship, etc.). Persons that have already worked in a certain field of work but do not have any certificates can be tested by the training institutes implementing or be any private company, after testing a report of practical and theoretical competences is send to the PES counsellor. Based on this report a career plan with perspectives and needed further training steps is elaborated.

- **Nostrification or professional recognition**
- **Supporting Measures**: various workshops to get familiar with the Austrian labour market, social system, cultural aspects, etc.

4.2 “Erhöhung der sprachlichen Kompetenzen im Bereich der Fachsprache” (Project Antenne – Strengthening of language competences in the field of technical language)

This project was developed together with the *Beratungsstelle für MigrantInnen* (Counselling Service for Migrants) in 2005. After the pilot phase it became part of selected VET training measures at the BFI Wien.

Target group are persons who complete a VET training in the field of electronic/metal professions and German is their second language. German level B1 - B2

Training duration: 12 weeks

Contents and targets:

- Strengthening of language competence
- German as technical language
- German and Mathematic (e.g. understanding problems in text form)
- Intercultural competences
- Self-learning material (audio-visual) and learning material (electronic version)

Language competence check at the beginning of the training. In specific the language knowledge and competence in the technical language (e. g. knowledge of professional tools, instruments, material, activities, etc.) is tested.

Methods: *Lernwerkstatt* (learning workshop). In the centre of interest is active learning as well as learning through experiences. It builds up on the potential (experience and knowledge) of participants and enables individual learning in various social forms (individual, pairs, groups).

4.3 Project Logo (General Competence Check in the field of calculation)

This project is not primarily targeting asylum seekers or migrants but is a good practice example for a competence check in the field of mathematics.

Competence Check is an assessment test of basic calculation competences in three parts:

- Part one: Summation, Subtraction fractions and multiplications with numbers until 5-digits;
- Part two: decimal numbers, equations, basic logical relations;
- Part three: calculation with measuring sticks, area calculation (circle, cylinder, quarters, triangle, etc.), percentages;

Based on the assessment results the person will take part in various modules.

Target group are persons with a knowledge gap in the field of mathematics and would like to attend a VET training.

Aims:

- Strengthening of basic math techniques, cognitive skills and understanding of logical relations
- To recognize problems with math and provide adequate measures to strengthen skills and competences

Training duration: 7-12 weeks

Math competences are checked at the beginning of the training (information day) in form of a written text. Exercises consist of calculations, mathematics and logical relations.

4.4 German Language Trainings – various levels

Language Competence Check in general:

The language competence check consists of a written and an oral test. Literacy level, vocabulary, writing and oral competences are tested.

Methods: reading of short articles to be able to assess the reading competence; short dictates and tests to be able to assess the writing competence; conversations, dialogue, description of pictures and texts to assess the oral competence.

Example: “Deutsch – Alphabetisierung” (German basic literacy training)

Target Group: minimum of 90 % of the participants have an asylum status

Training Duration: 4 weeks / per participant

Training: The training consists of 4 modules:

- Introduction and basic understanding – Module 1 and 2;
- Literacy training – writing and reading – Module 3;
- Intensive further literacy training with the focus upon writing and reading – Module 4.

At the end of each module the gained knowledge is assessed. Either they can continue with the next module, or they can take part in an intensive literacy workshop.

4.5 BBE - Kompetenzzentrum zur beruflichen Anerkennung im Ausland erworbener Qualifikationen (Competence centre for validating VET qualifications acquired abroad)

Is a guidance and counselling project and supports refugees and migrants in validating their practical and theoretical VET competences in Austria.

Target group are migrants who have acquired a VET qualification in their country of origin and would like to validate their skills and competences. Migrants need at least A2/B1 level German.¹

Duration: 10 days + follow-up support for 3 months

The aim is to generate an expertise for every participant based on the existing competences of every person. The person has to run through competence orientated assessment centres. The result is a mapping of all social, practical and theoretical competences. The experts shall support the PES counsellor in identifying tailor-made qualifications that support the persons to gain the level of an apprenticeship degree.

¹ See: http://docs.ams.at/wien/sfa/bildungstraeger/systemlandkarte_weg_zur_lap/kompetenzzentrum_bbe.pdf (2016-09-28)

Content of the measure:

- Clearing phase, collection of personal data, personality tests and tests of potential (day 1)
- f-2-f counselling and theoretical competence test (day 2,3)
- practical competence assessment in an assessment centre (days 4-8)
- f-2-f counselling: analysis of clearing, theoretical competence test and practical competence assessment (days 9-10)

4.6 Qualifikationspass Wien (Qualification Pass Vienna)²

Started in November 2015 in Vienna as a pilot project, since November 2016 it is used all over Vienna (and also some other regions in Austria are interested in using this tool).

The Qualification Pass contains a data based mapping of labour market oriented competences for persons with max. finished compulsory school or with a higher education gained abroad which is not recognised in Austria; the goal is to gain an apprenticeship degree.

For the Qualification Pass a database was developed where, besides information on formal education and qualifications, tasks of former occupations as well as work and practical experience can be listed. The database consists of two parts:

- one for the counsellors, where aims of the Qualification Pass are listed as well as information on professional/work experience;
- one for clients, where information on formal education and practical experience can be listed and (school) certificates can be uploaded.

The project uses an inter-institutional approach (AMS, WAFF, WKÖ, *Lehrlingsstelle*) so it is possible to focus on the goal no matter if you are jobless or not; comparable to "Skillsbank".

Persons aged 18 and above can participate in the Qualification Pass.

Refugees are not a specific target group of the "*Qualifikationspass Wien*", the main goal is to reach an official apprenticeship degree – until October 2016 approx. 990 persons participated in the programme, 63 % of the participants were not born in Austria, but it was mostly used for migrants in Austria. The "*Qualifikationspass Wien*" is mainly used by the PES itself, the check of competences is the first project of PES Vienna where also training institutes have the possibility to use this tool for their clients. The mapping is mainly comparable with the mapping of the competence check (dealing language skills, formal education, working experience; see chapter 4.1).

4.7 “Start Wien – Das Jugendcollege (Start Vienna – youth college)

The initiative started in July 2016 and is offering courses for 1,000 young migrants, mostly refugees and asylum seekers, who no longer have to attend school/do not have to attend compulsory schooling anymore. Already at the end of September 2016 there are approx. 200 people on a waiting list, therefore the need and interest for the programme can be considered rather high.

² Information collected by Petra Ziegler (WIAB) at the event „Europass macht transparent“ on 5 October 2016, during a workshop facilitated by Dietmar Wipplinger (WAFF) and Sabine Vilim (AMS Wien). Basic information provided by Kai Themel (AMS Wien).

The target group of the programme are young refugees between 15 and 21 years, who are already (officially recognised) refugees or asylum seekers.

The main aim is to prepare the young people to be ready to start a secondary school or vocational education.

The programme is starting in summer 2016 in Vienna and is being conducted by a large project partnership including: Wiener Volkshochschulen GmbH, WUK-Verein zur Schaffung offener Kultur-und Werkstättenhäuser, Caritas, Integrationshaus, Interface Wien, abz*austria, equalizent, PROSA, BPI der ÖJAB, whereas VHS Wien is the lead partner. PES Vienna and Fonds soziales Wien are mostly responsible for procuring young refugees to the programme.

The programme starts with a clearing phase, where existing skills and competences are being recognised and the level of education is determined. Based on this information, an individual 'educational plan' (*Bildungsplan*) is being developed. The clearing phase takes two days and the youngsters are tested in the field of German language skills, mathematics, English and IT. Furthermore they have one-on-one coaching regarding the question if the youth college is the appropriate active labour market measure for them. Depending on the assessed needs and recognised competences, the participants will be attending different courses.

Usually the training takes 20 hours per week and main priorities are: German language skills; besides this, there are modules dealing with ICT-skills, English, mathematics, occupational information, social counselling and on-the-job trainings.

Main challenge for the programme is the very divers level of skills, competences and level of education of the young refugees: Some need to learn how to read and write, others would like to prepare to start at a university. Based on these very divers needs, individual plans are being developed that are updated every eight weeks. Approx. 30 counsellors and 80 trainers are working at the Jugendcollege.³

The project is funded by the ESF, as well as the Viennese municipality, AMS Wien and Fonds Soziales Wien, the budget is approx. € 6 million per year.⁴

³ Information also retrieved from Mittagsjournal 1.10.2016 at Ö1.

⁴ See: <https://www.wien.gv.at/rk/msg/2016/07/06005.html> (2016-09-28)

Country fiche: France

1 General information on refugee situation

1.1 Developments since 2015

In France, the number of asylum applications increased less sharp in the past three years than in other European countries. In 2014 for example, while Germany and Italy registered a sharp increase in new asylum applications, France registered a slight decrease (around 45,000, corresponding to – 2 % compared to 2013) (Martín et al. 2016b, 52). In 2015 however, asylum applications showed an increase of 23.3 % from 2014 with 79,914 asylum applications registered in 2015. A particularly sharp increase in applications can be seen from countries with high protection needs: + 64.2 % Syria, + 184 % Sudan, + 254 % Iraq, Afghanistan + 349.2 %. But applications increased also in countries where protection needs are traditionally lower: +96.8 % Kosovo, + 76.3 % Haiti.⁵

France committed to take approx. 30,000 asylum seekers in the framework of the European Relocation Scheme decided by the European Council in 2015 (France terre d’asile 2016, 11). For the moment however only small numbers of asylum seekers have arrived through this channel: 231 persons were relocated from Italy and 1,721 persons from Greece by September 2016. 664 persons were resettled under the European Resettlement Scheme (including the 1:1 mechanism with Turkey) by September 2016.⁶

It has to be mentioned that people in need of protection in transit, as well as failed asylum seekers that remain on French territory are invisible to statistics in France and that several thousand people are estimated as staying in the “jungle” in Calais since early 2016 (Martín et al. 2016b, 53); at the end of October 2016 the demolition of the camp began and several 1,000 refugees were relocated. Furthermore, asylum seekers and refugees are highly concentrated geographically in France. In 2014, almost half of the refugees were staying either in the Île - de-France (41 %) or in the Rhône-Alpes (8 %) regions (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 52).

1.2 Data on refugees

The countries of origin of asylum seekers are very diverse in recent years. While in the period 2011/2014 the leading countries of origin were the Democratic Republic of Congo, Russia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Albania and Kosovo, in 2015 and 2016 the number of asylum seekers from Syria, Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan has increased significantly. In 2015, citizens from Syria represented for the first time the second largest group of asylum seekers after Sudan, followed by Kosovo and Haiti. In the first months of 2016, applications from Afghans were also increasing and almost surpassed Syrian applications (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 53).

The protection rate for asylum seekers has also increased between 2014 (28 %) and 2015 (31.5 %). In 2015, 5,122 citizens from Syria applied for asylum and almost all of them were granted protection.⁷ In 2015 (January to September), the highest overall recognition rates were recorded for Iraqis (99 %) and Syrians (96 %) (ibid.).

⁵ See: OFPRA website: <https://ofpra.gouv.fr/fr/l-ofpra/actualites/premiers-chiffres-de-l-asile-en> (2016-10-26)

⁶ See: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/20160928/factsheet_relocation_and_resettlement_-_state_of_play_en.pdf (2016-10-25)

⁷ See: OFPRA website: <https://ofpra.gouv.fr/fr/l-ofpra/actualites/premiers-chiffres-de-l-asile-en> (2016-10-26)

2 Labour market situation

In July 2015, a reform of the French asylum law (the law is largely codified in the *Code de l'entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d'asile*, CESEDA⁸) was approved, but it did not foresee any major changes with regard to access to the labour market for asylum seekers and refugees, except for the reduction of the foreseen period before which asylum seekers can apply for a work permit from twelve to nine months. In general, asylum seekers are not entitled to work during the examination of their application (ibid. 53).

The work permit has a validity of 3 months, which corresponds to the validity of the asylum seeker's temporary residence permit, and applies only for salaried working activities. Self-employment is not allowed under the law. In accordance with the Labour Code, the administration can undertake a 'labour market test' taking into account geographical aspects and the employment situation in a professional sector when deciding if a work permit is granted or not. In France a principle of "enforceability of the employment situation" is taken into account, which means that a work permit is issued to an asylum seeker only if there is no French, European citizen or foreign national already holding a work authorization who can be employed. A denial of a work authorization must be motivated with statistical data (ibid.).

There are no official statistical data on the applications for a work permit requested by and granted to asylum seekers in France. Following a recent study of Bertelsmann Stiftung (2016) asylum seekers apply rarely in practice for a work permit, mainly because it is difficult for them to find an employer that is willing to recruit them, when their residence permit is only valid for 3 months.

Another problem can be seen in the fact that the vast majority of work permit requests of asylum seekers are denied because most of the asylum seekers apply for work in low skilled occupations where already high unemployment rates can be found. Although it is foreseen by law that asylum seekers who have had access to the labour market can benefit from professional training, there have no vocational training schemes been launched (ibid. 53f.).

While the access to the labour market is extremely limited for asylum seekers in France, recognized refugees have general access to the labour market and to the services offered by Pôle Emploi, the French Public Employment Service. As soon as they are granted protection, refugees are automatically entitled to unemployment benefit (*revenu de solidarité active*, RSA) even if they have not worked in France before. After obtaining refugee status, refugees benefit from personalised guidance e.g. regarding access to employment and accommodation.

Since refugees enjoy the same rights as other citizens (except for some civic rights like the right to vote and mobility), they can apply for a VAE (*validation des acquis de l'expérience*), since each individual with at least three years experience in paid, unpaid or voluntary work has the right to apply for the validation of its non-formally and informally acquired competences (France terre d'asile 2007, 2). However, in practice most VAE procedures are not applicable to refugees due to the fact that they require three years of professional experience in the country and sufficient language skills to describe in detail and reflect on the competences one has acquired via previous professional experience.⁹ Based on a recent report on migration and validation of non-formal and informal learning in Europe, no specific

⁸ See: <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/refugee-law/france.php> (2016-10-26)

⁹ This information was received during a short interview with David Guéret, pedagogical referent at IPERIA, a certification organisation in the field of social care, on 27th of October 2016.

individual projects or target measures for the validation of immigrants are in place in France (Souto-Otero, Villalba-Garcia 2015, 598).

The length of the administrative procedure to obtain a refugee card that authorizes work is extremely long in France. The release of the civil status certificate (to be provided by OFPRA before the refugee card) can take more than one year. During this time, refugees are only given temporary permits of stay with a limited validity for 3 months (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 54f.).

Following a recent study of Bertelsmann Stiftung (2016), it can be summarized that for asylum seekers it is basically impossible to enter the formal labour market of France, because they face numerous difficulties as for example non-legal obstacles such as language proficiency, social isolation, unfamiliarity with the recruitment and job search system etc. But even if asylum seekers obtain protection, they are mostly employed in low-skilled, precarious and manual occupations; quite often they work on the informal labour market (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 26).

3 Important actors

Federal level

Ministry of the Interior: <http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/> and <http://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/>

Ministry of labour, employment and social dialogue: <http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/>

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health: <http://social-sante.gouv.fr/>

Ministry of Education: <http://www.education.gouv.fr/>

Comité interministériel de contrôle de l'immigration (CICI): https://lannuaire.service-public.fr/gouvernement/conseil-comite-commission-organisme-consultatif_165718

Court Nationale du droit d'asile: <http://www.cnda.fr/>

Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (OFPRA): <https://www.ofpra.gouv.fr/>

L'office Français de l'immigration et de l'intégration (OFII): <https://www.ofii.fr>

Directions régionales des entreprises, de la concurrence, de la consommation, du travail et de Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (Le CNAM): <http://www.cnam.fr/>

Pôle Emploi (Public Employment Service): <http://www.pole-emploi.fr/accueil/>

Regional and municipal level

Refugee Forum Cosi: <http://www.forumrefugies.org/>

Des Passarelles pour l'insertion: <http://www.passerelles-asso.net/>

Fédération des acteurs de la solidarité/FNARS: <http://www.fnars.org/>

CIMADE: www.lacimade.org

NGOs

Croix rouge Française: <https://www.croix-rouge.fr/>

CCFD terre solidaire: www.ccfcd-terresolidaire.org

SECOURS POPULAIRE: www.secourspopulaire.fr

SINGA: <https://singa.fr/>

France Terre d'Asile: <http://www.france-terre-asile.org/>

Validation

VAE, le portail de la validation des acquis de l'expérience: <http://www.vae.gouv.fr/>

Bilan de compétences: <http://bilancompetences.fr/>

4 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

4.1 Bilan de compétence (access after signing the contrat d'accueil et d'intégration, CAI)

Since 2007, migrants from outside the EU, including refugees, must sign a Reception and Integration Contract (*contrat d'accueil et d'intégration*, CAI) at the Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) upon their arrival which aims at facilitating their integration into French society and is a precondition for receiving personal support for example with regard to labour market access.¹⁰ The CAI, which is compulsory to receive a residence permit for more than one year (since 2007), gives refugees access to a language training according to their personal level of proficiency and foresees an assessment of their professional competences (*bilan des compétences*) that provides an overview of their skills and competences, potential, business and personal motivations and can be used to define a coherent professional perspective as well as training needs¹¹ to find employment (IOM 2013, 31).

The aims of this measure are to identify and document the qualifications, professional experiences and competences in the context of a job search. After the assessment, the refugee or beneficiary of subsidiary protection may receive a job offer or a training by Pôle Emploi to improve his/her chances for an employment.

Target group: Refugees or persons with subsidiary protection registered as unemployed at the job centre and have signed the obligatory integration contract (*Contrat d'Accueil et d'Intégration*)

Content: professional skills assessment (*bilan des compétences*)

Duration: based on the need of the client, but limited to maximum 3 hours.

The decision if a refugee or beneficiary of subsidiary protection can benefit from the professional skills assessment, it decided from case to case.

Methods and procedure: It has to be mentioned that there exist variations of the *bilan des compétences*¹² based on different institutions that offer the skills assessment to different target groups.

Usually the following phases are differentiated:

- preliminary phase: definition and analysis of needs, information on the methods and techniques used etc.
- investigation phase: analysis of motivations, personal and professional interests, identification of professional and personal skills and abilities, general knowledge assessment as well as opportunities for professional development
- conclusion phase: analysing the results of the investigation phase, identifying factors that favour the realization of a professional or training project

¹⁰ See: <http://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Asile/Les-droits-des-beneficiaires-d-une-protection/L-integration> (2016-10-26);

¹¹ See: <http://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Asile/Les-droits-des-beneficiaires-d-une-protection/L-integration> (2016-10-26);

¹² The bilancing of competences acquired in various areas (job, employment, voluntary work etc.) represents a legal right in France, but the identified and documented competences are not certified and thus the procedure has not the same official recognition value as formal education or competences validated via a VAE (Plateform de service aux migrants 2014, 10).

Documentation of results: The conclusion phase often ends with a written summary.

Evaluation: In 2011, 58.7 % of refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection made a *bilan des compétences*. After three months, a quarter of them found a job, another third found a job after six months (Platform de service aux migrants 2014, 3).

4.2 French language proficiency tests: TCF, DILF, DELF, DALF

Aims: The *Diplôme initial de langue française* (DILF), *Diplôme d'études en langue française* (DELF), and *Diplôme approfondi de langue française* (DALF) are official French proficiency tests administered by the *Centre international d'étude pédagogiques* (CIEP) and can be seen as equivalents of the English proficiency test TOEFL.

Content: In contrast to the TOEFL which requires the candidate to take a test (duration 2 to 4 hours) to receive a score of his/her results indicating the level of proficiency, the DILF/DELF/DALF certification consists of multiple levels and uses a score of seven *diplômes* from the *Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche*: DILF A1.1, DELF A1, DELF A2, DELF B1, DELF B2, DALF C1, DALF C2.¹³ Each of these certificates tests the four language proficiencies reading, writing, listening, and speaking, based on the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The diplomas can be passed independently from each other and there is a special version for young people and scholars (DEFL junior and DEFL *scolaire*) available.

Responsible institutions: The *Alliance française* and many other French schools offer DILF/DELF/DALF preparation classes as well as the exams themselves.¹⁴

Precondition: In the context of signing the reception and integration contract (*contract d'accueil et d'intégration*, CAI) refugees or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have to pass a French language test. If they pass the test, they receive a ministerial certificate and do not have to participate in language courses any more. If they do not pass the test, they have to participate in a language training, which can take up to 400 hours, depending on their starting level.

Duration: The CAI based access to training in French is signed for a period of one year. In this time, the person must achieve oral and written practice at a sufficient level. To demonstrate the adequate language level, it is necessary to pass the DILF. If the person fails to reach the required level a second course of training and a second presentation is considered on a case by case basis by OFII, the responsible institution.

Documentation of results: At the end of the training, the refugees or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection receive the *Diplôme initial de langue française* (DILF) which states the acquired level of his/her language skills.¹⁵

¹³ See: Internet portal „about education“: <http://french.about.com/od/francophonie/a/dilf-delf-dalf.htm> (2016-10-27)

¹⁴ See: Internet portal „about education“: <http://french.about.com/od/francophonie/a/dilf-delf-dalf.htm> (2016-10-27)

¹⁵ See: Internet portal „about education“: <http://french.about.com/od/francophonie/a/dilf-delf-dalf.htm>
<http://www.ciep.fr/dilf/presentation-generale>; <http://www.france-terre-asile.org/refugies-col-280/infos-migrants/refugies#français> (all: 2016-10-27)

4.3 The recognition of diplomas of migrants

Aims: For refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection with academic qualifications, it is possible to recognize these degrees in France.

Procedure: If a person has no copies of diplomas, he/she can bring a sworn statement detailing the studies followed and the certificates or titles acquired in his/her country of origin. The demand for "comparability certificate" must be sent to ENIC-NARIC France. The comparability certificate allows to compare the qualification obtained in the country of origin to a diploma recognized in France.

Costs: Free of charge for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.

Results: It allows the person holding the diploma to enrol in college or justify his/her knowledge when applying for a job (Platform de service aux migrants 2014, 10).

Responsible institution: The ENIC-NARIC Centre France is aiming at the implementation of specific measures for the evaluation of academic and professional careers of refugees. CIEP attached to the centre ENIC-NARIC France is the French information centre on the academic and professional recognition of qualifications.

Procedure: ENIC-NARIC issues certificates to diplomas, studies, training obtained or taken abroad, informs on the procedures for exercising a regulated profession and provides information on the recognition of French qualifications abroad. To meet the demands of recognising qualifications of refugees, the ENIC-NARIC France Centre provides free and priority treatment, with minimal documentation.

4.4 Accelair-Cosi Forum individual professional and language training for refugees (based on the refugee integration program "Accelair"¹⁶)

Aims of „Accelair“: Funded by the state and the European Union, „Accelair“ offers individual support for the search for accommodation, job and vocational training. In the professional field, the preparation of applications for unemployment allowance and a skill assessment as well as the development of a professional project and job search are provided. Language training in the workplace for companies that have offered to hire refugees and language training tests are offered as well (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 60).

Target group of „Accelair“: newly recognized refugees (in the first year after recognition).

Evaluation results and transfer of methodology of „Accelair“:

¹⁶ In 2002 the program "Accelair" was launched as part of the European program "Equal". The aim of this European program was to promote socio-professional integration of refugees by providing a coordinated response in terms of access to employment, training and housing. The program was renewed under the name of "Accelair" under the European Social Fund (2005-2007) and under the European Refugee Fund (2008-2013). Since 2014, "Accelair" is supported by the Fonds Asile Migration Intégration (<http://www.forumrefugies.org/missions/missions-aupres-des-refugies/programme-d-integration-des-refugies-accelair> (2016-10-27)).

„According to the data provided by the NGO, the project offers capillary coverage. In 2014, some 800 households (some 1,200 adults) of 55 nationalities received support, and two thirds of the beneficiaries of the Accelair project had access to training or to a job. The speed of access to the first training was 4.9 months and 8.7 months for a job. Today, the project supports some 90 per cent of the newly-recognized refugees in the Rhone department. Since its creation, it has allowed 2,150 households to access accommodation, more than 1,600 training places and 2,700 job contracts“ (ibid.).

Target group: Persons with refugee status that fail to enter the labour market because their skills are not appropriate for the French labour market and they lack sufficient French language skills.

Aims of the Accelair-Cosi Forum program: The refugee *Accelair-Cosi* Forum program aims to bridge the gaps between refugees knowledge and skills and the demand of enterprises by implementing French courses and the learning of French culture at the CNAM (developing an individual training program based on the refugees' needs).¹⁷

Content of the Accelair-Cosi Forum program:

- Give refugees full information on CNAM training and services
- accompany them in developing their career and training plans
- consider with them the feasibility of a training project at CNAM, taking into account their prior learning
- accompany them in their training courses¹⁸

Methods and procedure of the Accelair-Cosi Forum program:

October 2016: Twelve refugees from Pierre Claver association have been selected and enrolled in skills training in information technology, human resources, law or an entrepreneurship certification. They signed an attendance contract to receive an internship of 15 days.

November 2016: assessment of their technical and language skills and their ability to understand and adapt.¹⁹

December 2016: creation of a training program adapted to the individual profile (beneficiaries together with the companies, the trainers of CNAM Rhône-Alpes and language experts).

January to June 2017: the refugees will follow a personalized training combined with training in French foreign language (FLE) that is also tailored to the needs of the industry in which they will work.

July and October 2017: refugees will be accompanied to employment by the employment referents of the program „*Accelair*“.²⁰

4.5 Evaluation des compétences et des connaissances professionnelles (ECCP) for job seekers

Aims:

¹⁷ See: <http://www.forumrefugies.org/s-informer/communiqués/le-cnam-rhone-alpes-et-forum-refugies-cosi-s-associé-pour-la-formation-des-refugies> (2016-10-27)

¹⁸ See: <http://presentation.cnam.fr/histoire-projet/le-cnam-s-engage-pour-les-migrants-786454.kjsp> (2016-10-27)

¹⁹ See: <http://www.forumrefugies.org/s-informer/communiqués/le-cnam-rhone-alpes-et-forum-refugies-cosi-s-associé-pour-la-formation-des-refugies> (2016-10-27)

²⁰ See: <http://www.forumrefugies.org/s-informer/communiqués/le-cnam-rhone-alpes-et-forum-refugies-cosi-s-associé-pour-la-formation-des-refugies> (2016-10-27)

- Validating skills and abilities in relation to a chosen trade/business
- Identifying transferable skills for other professions
(YUSS 2011, 9)

Content: The evaluation allows job seekers to validate their skills and knowledge with regard to the requirements of the labour market and to identify alternative jobs/occupations that they could take into account when searching for jobs.

Responsible institution and costs: The skills assessment must be done in a job centre and is free of charge. The evaluation is done by a contracted provider of Pôle Emploi, e.g. a training centre.

Duration: The procedure takes between half a day and a day, depending on the job or profession for which the assessment is made.²¹

Content: The evaluation includes tests of general knowledge, generic skills, professional questionnaires, simulations and real or simulated practical cases. The evaluation consists of the following elements:

- Taking stock of the professional experience of a jobseeker
- Identifying and developing his/her strengths for job search
- Defining an action plan to reduce the skills gap between a job/occupation and the jobseekers' competence profile
- Specifying the jobseekers' needs for training accurately²²

Methods and procedures:

The evaluation comprises three phases:

1. Information phase: presentation of the procedure and assessment tools
2. Assessment phase: transition tests, exams or simulations
3. Reporting phase: analysis, synthesis and drafting a report²³

Testing is carried out either on machines or on computers and leads to a debriefing with a trainer who presents the results to the candidate. The candidate can thus gain a balanced view of his/her professional competences.²⁴

4.6 Période d'immersion professionnelle, PMSMP (former EMT)

Aims: The PMSMP as part of a preventive approach addresses employees who looking for a job or in a phase of career transition; as part of its proactive approach it addresses unemployed beneficiaries or people who are not registered at the employment centre. The PMSMP is used so that candidates face real situations to learn a trade, to confirm a professional project or initiate a recruitment process.

²¹ See: Website of Pôle Emploi - <http://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/l-evaluation-des-competences-et-des-capacites-professionnelles-eccp--@/article.jspz?id=60639> (

²² See: Website of Pôle Emploi - <http://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/l-evaluation-des-competences-et-des-capacites-professionnelles-eccp--@/article.jspz?id=60639> (2016-10-27)

²³ See: Website of Pôle Emploi - <http://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/l-evaluation-des-competences-et-des-capacites-professionnelles-eccp--@/article.jspz?id=60639> (2016-10-27)

²⁴ Information about this programme obtained during an interview with David Guéret, Référent pédagogique at IPERIA, on 27 October 2016.

Target group: The PMSMP is only available for people with access to an unemployment scheme by common law and in this context as well to refugees (Article L.711-1 of the CESEDA) or persons granted subsidiary protection (Article L.712-1 of the CESEDA). Furthermore, periods of work-based simulation exercises are aimed at any person subject to a personalized social or professional support.

Duration: The periods of work-based simulation exercises are organized over a period of 1-30 days.

Methods and procedure: the PMSMP takes place in a company with a tutor and has three possible goals:

- to find a job,
- to confirm a professional project and e.g. assess the skills to perform a job,
- to initiate a recruitment process.²⁵

Documentation of results: At the end of the period an evaluation sheet is given to the candidate (a duplicate goes to Pôle Emploi). It is possible to use several PMSMP, but never two in the same company.²⁶

²⁵ Information about this programme obtained during an interview with David Guéret, Référent pédagogique at IPERIA, on 27 October 2016, and see website of Ministry of Labour: <http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/formation-professionnelle/formation-professionnelle-des-demandeurs-d-emploi/article/periodes-de-mise-en-situation-en-milieu-professionnel> (2016-10-28)

²⁶ Interview with David Guéret, Référent pédagogique at IPERIA, on 27th of October 2016.

Country fiche: Germany

1 General information on refugee situation

1.1 Developments since 2015

The number of asylum applications in Germany increased from 202,834 in 2014 to 476,649 in 2015 and 577,065 asylum applications in 2016 (January – August); the number of asylum applications includes follow-up applications and initial applications. The number of initial applications grew in Germany from 173,072 in 2014, to 441,899 in 2015 and 564,506 in 2016 (January – August). In 2015, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees accepted 282,726 applications (2014: 128,911); 137,136 people received the refugee status under the Geneva Convention (48.5 % of all asylum seekers). In addition, 1,707 persons (0.6 %) received subsidiary protection and 2,072 persons (0.7 %) protection against deportation.

The number of refugees who arrived in Germany without applying for asylum was however much higher and amounted to 890,000 people in 2015 (registered via the EASY system)²⁷. The reason for this difference is that asylum applications are sometimes made in delay and cannot be done immediately when arriving in the country. Furthermore, many refugees who arrived in Germany and have been distributed to different domiciles in different regions leave the country before they apply for asylum (Statista website 2016)²⁸.

1.2 Data on refugees

Concerning the country of origin of people who applied for asylum in Germany for the first time in 2015 most people came from:

- Syria (158,657)
- Albania (53,805)
- Kosovo (33,427)

followed by Afghanistan (31,382) and Iraq (29,784).²⁹

In 2016, the three top countries of origin regarding initial asylum applications are Syria (223,632), Afghanistan (100,265) and Iraq (78,436); that means the number of applications from Afghans were almost three times higher than 2015, applications from Iraqis more than two times higher and applications from Syrians still showed quite an increase (bpb Website 2016).

In 2015, 69 % of all 441,889 initial asylum applications were made by men and 31 % by women. In 2016, the share of applications from women slightly increased to 34 % (bpb Website 2016).

More than half of the asylum applicants (56 %) in 2015 were between 0 and 24 years old, 30 % were between 16 and 24 years old³⁰. The largest part of all applicants are children between 0 and 15 years (26 % or 117,008 people) and young people between 18 and 24 years (25 % or 109,672 people). These are followed by people in the age of 25-29 years (15 % or 67,258) and

²⁷ Der Spiegel: <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/fluechtlinge-2015-kamen-890-000-schutzsuchende-nach-deutschland-a-1114739.html> (2016-11-15)

²⁸ See: <https://de.statista.com/statistik/studie/id/7048/dokument/asyl-statista-dossier/> (2016-11-07)

²⁹ The category “other countries” covered 78,265 people in 2015 and 77,401 people in 2016 (bpb Website 2016).

³⁰ From these 130,143 people in the age of 16-24 the largest part was male (104,374) and only a much smaller part was female (25,769).

people who are between 30 and 34 years old (11 % or 46,698). In 2016 the distribution of age groups changed only slightly (bpb Website 2016).

2 Labour market situation

In Germany the right to enter the labour market depends on a refugees' legal status. Four types exist:

- people entitled to asylum
- people with subsidiary protection status
- asylum seekers
- tolerated refugees

Asylum seekers and tolerated refugees have been banned from employment for many years and only since 2014 asylum seekers can get access to the labour market three months after having formally applied for asylum or having been registered after border crossing (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 29)

During the first three months, asylum seekers and people with subsidiary protection or entitled for asylum are subject to residence restriction (depending on the location of the assigned foreigner office). After this waiting period they are allowed to choose their place of residence (since 2015) and to take up work, if the foreign office and the Public Employment Service – *Bundesagentur für Arbeit* (since 2014; DG Employment 2016e, 3).

In general, asylum seekers and people with subsidiary protection or entitled for asylum can only receive a work permit, if the so called “priority review” (*Vorrangprüfung*) of the Public Employment Service shows that there are no nationals or EU citizens who can do the job instead. The priority review must be finished within 15 months. The duration of this procedure has been criticised as taking too long and representing an administrative burden. However, for “shortage occupations” and high-skilled workers and jobseekers working in these professions free access to the labour market without a “priority review” from the Public Employment Service is possible under certain circumstances (ibid).

Persons who have been granted either asylum or subsidiary protection status obtain a residence permit³¹ (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*) and have access to the labour market without any restrictions. Furthermore, in February 2016, the federal government announced that asylum seekers who start an apprenticeship will obtain a guaranteed residence permit limited to the duration of the apprenticeship plus two additional years for gaining additional job experience (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 29).

Already in September 2015 several measures have been launched to support the integration of refugees in Germany. Learning the language, starting to work or participating in education and training have been addressed in these measures since they represent important factors for the integration into the society. For example, language courses are already starting before the

³¹ „According to German Asylum Law, a residence permit may be cancelled within three years if the reason for asylum ceases to exist due to an improved situation in the country of origin. Although this regulation has been applied in only very few cases, it causes uncertainty about the long-term prospect of settlement in Germany for the migrants“ (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 70).

recognition as a refugee and validation of qualifications and vocational experience of refugees by the Public Employment Service started earlier.³²

In May 2016, a new integration law (*Integrationsgesetz*) came into force allowing to suspend – depending on the labour market context – the “priority review” for three years (DG EMPL 2016e, 3). To avoid any potential negative impact in regions where the labour market is tight, the federal states (*Bundesländer*) are to decide in which districts this arrangement applies. The integration law aims especially at improving the integration in education and the labour market for all social security recipients (including recognised refugees)³³ by offering:

- Local opportunities from an early stage: A labour market programme has been established to let refugees gain initial experience of the German labour market even before the asylum procedure is completed.
- More targeted support for vocational training: Training-related assistance, assisted training and pre-vocational training programmes will be available sooner, depending on the target group. Training grants will be available to new target groups.
- More legal certainty during vocational training: If a course of school-based or in-company vocational training is started, the immigrant will retain a “tolerated person” status for the entire period of the vocational training, regardless of his/her age. Those who drop out of training or completed the training will receive a six-month extension of their status giving them a chance to find a new vocational training place or a job. People who complete vocational training will be entitled to residence in Germany for a further two years (3+2 rule) if they find a job which reflects their new qualification.³⁴

It is estimated that about two third of the refugees coming to Germany have not acquired a formal vocational education that corresponds to qualifications in the German education system. Therefore, they cannot apply for an official recognition and will have difficulties to enter the labour market. In 2015 the procedures for competence identification and assessment gained importance and procedures that have been developed especially for migrants are seen as transferable to the target group of refugees (IQ 2016, 4).

The federal programme “*Integration durch Qualifizierung*” (IQ; integration by qualification) was initiated by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2005, is financed by the Public Employment Service and is coordinated by the *Zentralstelle für die Weiterbildung im Handwerk* (ZWH). It aims at the improvement of the labour market perspectives of migrants and offers support in six working fields: guidance, qualification, competence assessment, professional German language knowledge, business start up and intercultural opening. The network develops and promotes strategies, instruments and guidelines as well as qualification and guidance concepts that will contribute to more effectiveness of the labour market instruments (LIFE 2011, 21).

The most important instruments for the labour market integration of refugees are the so called *integration courses* which comprise 600 hours of language training and 60 hours of information on German culture and politics. In addition, the so called *vocational language courses* focus on German language knowledge for the employment context. Besides this, the

³² See: <http://www.bmas.de/DE/Schwerpunkte/Neustart-in-Deutschland/neustart-in-deutschland-art.html> (2016-10-28)

³³ In Germany, labour market policies exist at the federal, state (*Bundesländer*) and local levels. Employment policy in general does not differentiate between nationals and foreigners with legal access to the labour market. The same instruments are provided for both (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 30).

³⁴ See: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs - <http://www.bmas.de/EN/Our-Topics/Fresh-start-in-germany/the-new-integration-act.html> (2016-10-25)

government is fostering the identification and recognition of occupational qualifications acquired by asylum seekers and refugees in their home countries (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 30).

In June 2016 the Public Employment Service started to collect statistic data about refugees, asylum seekers etc. who are registered as jobseekers. In September 2016 367,000 immigrants who fled their country have been registered as job-seeking at the Public Employment Service or one of its job centres, among those were 157.000 unemployed people with the following status: recognised refugees (116,000), temporary residence permit (38,000) and 2,600 tolerated persons (Bundesagentur 2016, 10).

A large part of the unemployed refugees is younger than 35 years. Three fifth of the unemployed can only work in low skilled jobs, because they do not have sufficient knowledge in German, they are too young to have passed a vocational education or they do not have a recognised formal vocational qualification (ibid).

Unemployed refugees are searching for work mainly in sectors such as cleaning (19,000), in warehouses and logistics (13,600), as helpers in the kitchen (1,000), in sales (7,500) and in offices (4,400) (ibid).

Recent studies indicate furthermore that the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers is a long and difficult process and often takes several years³⁵.

By the end of 2015, most of the German federal states had launched (or prepared to launch) their own programmes to support the labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees. The following different types of programmes and measures are offered:

- Language courses
- Measures for an early skills and needs assessment
- Job coaching for asylum seekers
- Mediation of young asylum seekers into apprenticeship
- Establishing task forces in the government to steer the labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees
- Legal information and support of employers who are willing to employ asylum seekers and refugees
- Comprehensive programmes for the labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees
- Establishment of service points for asylum seekers and refugees
(Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 30)

Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a refers to the following most urgent challenges to support the successful labour market integration of refugees:

- Formal vocational qualification is still an important precondition to enter the German labour market. However, the high degree of formality, which also assumes a very good proficiency in German, seems far from appropriate. The challenge is to connect practical work with vocational qualifications.
- The prevalent strategy of “mainstreaming” refugees into the general support schemes for the job-seeking proportion of the population means that asylum seekers need information and orientation in the German vocational system.

³⁵ See for example Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 70 and Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 29.

- Employers willing to employ refugees still face legal obstacles and bureaucratic delays that prevent them from educating or employing asylum seekers, tolerated refugees and even recognised refugees.
- Women, unskilled persons and handicapped refugees should not be forgotten in labour market integration support measures. They will need specialised support schemes to get a chance to enter the labour market.
- For many immigrants, self-employment is an important option in becoming independent from state subsidies and in improving their social status. Up to now, the self-employment of refugees has hardly been considered (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016a, 31).

Among refugees the access to the German labour market is seen as extremely difficult and full of bureaucratic barriers. It is usually expected from refugees who are younger than 25 or 30 years that they complete the education they received in their country of origin and that they acquire a German qualification. And even if the qualifications acquired in the home countries of the immigrants can not be recognised fully, Germany actively supports the access of especially young refugees to the German education system. For refugees who are older than 35 years however the situation is more difficult and many of them feel that they have little chances to receive a recognition of the education they acquired in their country of origin. Many refugees with medium or high qualifications made the experience that the job centres offer them only unqualified jobs. For women this often means that they have to work in the cleaning sector and men often work in unskilled professions (IAB 2016, 108).

3 Important actors

Federal level

The Federal Government:

https://www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Themen/Fluechtlings-Asylpolitik/4-FAQ/function/glossar_catalog.html?nn=1419512&lv2=1663008

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF):

<http://www.bamf.de/DE/Willkommen/InformationBeratung/informationberatung-node.html>

Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI):

http://www.bmi.bund.de/DE/Themen/Migration-Integration/Asyl-Fluechtlingsschutz/asyl-fluechtlingsschutz_node.html

Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS):

<http://www.bmas.de/DE/Schwerpunkte/Neustart-in-Deutschland/Neustart-Asylsuchende/neustart-asylsuchende.html>

Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF): <https://www.bmbf.de/de/fluechtlinge-durch-bildung-integrieren.html>

Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (<http://www.bmwi.de>), supports initiatives such as: “Make it in Germany”: <http://www.make-it-in-germany.com/>,

BQ information portal for foreign professional qualifications: <https://www.bq-portal.de/de>,

“Alliance for Initial and Further Training”: <http://www.aus-und-weiterbildungsallianz.de>,

“KOFA – *Fachkräftesicherung für kleine und mittlere Unternehmen*”: www.kofa.de/themen-von-a-z/fluechtlinge

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ):

<https://www.bmz.de/webapps/flucht/#/de>

Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ):

<https://www.bmfsfj.de/>

Deutsche Industrie- und Handelskammer: <http://www.dihk.de/>, supports initiatives such as: “Network enterprises integrate refugees”: <https://www.unternehmen-integrieren-fluechtlinge.de/>,

ZDH – The German Confederation of Skilled Crafts: www.zdh.de/themen/bildung/karriere-im-handwerk/wege-in-ausbildung/passgenaue-besetzung-vormals-passgenaue-vermittlung/willkommenslotsen.html

Initiative „Stark für Ausbildung“: <http://www.stark-fuer-ausbildung.de/>

Public Employment Service (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*): <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/>

State and municipal level (selection)

Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Baden-Württemberg: <http://www.km-bw.de/Lde/Startseite/Ministerium>

Bayrisches Staatsministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, Familie und Integration (Migrationsberatung): <http://www.stmas.bayern.de/integration/beratung/index.php>

Migrations- und Integrationsrat des Landes Brandenburg: <http://mir-brandenburg.de/index.php> und IQ network Brandenburg: <http://www.brandenburg.netzwerk-iq.de/1077.html>

Integrationsportal Sachsen-Anhalt: <http://www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/netzwerke/beratungsstellen/migrationsberatung-fuer-erwachsene-mbe/>

Migrationsberatungsnetzwerk Hamburg: <http://www.mbe-netzwerk-hamburg.de/>

Migrationsberatung für Erwachsene und Jugendmigrationsdienst Mannheim: <https://www.mannheim.de/migrationsberatung>

AWO Arbeitswohlfahrt Berlin: <https://www.awoberlin.de/>

Flüchtlingsnetzwerk Hilstrup: <https://www.fluechtlingsnetzwerk-hilstrup.de/>

NGOs

Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege: <http://www.bagfw.de/>

Caritas Deutschland: <https://www.caritas.de/>

Diakonie: <http://www.diakonie.de/thema-kompakt-unbegleitete-minderjaehrige-fluechtlinge-16189.html>

Deutsches Rotes Kreuz: <https://www.drk.de/hilfe-weltweit/was-wir-tun/fluechtlingshilfe/>

Aktion Deutschland hilft: <https://www.aktion-deutschland-hilft.de/de/lp-hilfe-fluechtlinge>

SOS-Kinderdorf: <http://www.sos-kinderdorf.de/portal/bewegendes/sos-hilft-fluechtlingen>

Die Johanniter: <http://www.johanniter.de/hilfsprojekte/alte-seite-fluechtlingshilfe/fluechtlingshilfe-der-johanniter-in-deutschland/was-wir-tun/>

DGB Bildungswerk Bund: <http://www.dgb-bildungswerk.de/> (information portal:

<http://migration-online.de/>)

Arbeiterwohlfahrt Deutschland: www.awo.org

Der Paritätische Gesamtverband: <http://www.der-paritaetische.de/fachinfos/migration/>

Validation

Anerkennung in Deutschland (information portal validation in Germany):

<https://www.erkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/de/anerkenntungsverfahren.php>

IQ Netzwerk Integration durch Qualifizierung: <http://www.netzwerk-iq.de/>

IQ Fachstelle Anerkennung: <http://www.fachstelle-erkennung.de/>

4 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

Good practice examples combining competence assessment with professional orientation, empowerment and counselling (by IQ network)

The IQ „*Fachstelle Beratung und Qualifizierung*“ has collected several specific procedures of skills and competence audits for migrants that can be applied in labour market agencies, job centres or by other labour market stakeholders. Its handbook summarizes good practice instruments that aim at the target group of asylum seekers and refugees without a formal qualification. The advantage of these procedures is that professional orientation goes hand in hand with empowerment and the development of a career plan and a lot of counselling aiming at a long-term integration into the labour market (IQ 2016, 4).

4.1 Interview guidelines for the identification of professional competences *(Interviewleitfaden zur fachlichen Kompetenzerfassung*³⁶

Aims: Identification and documentation of professional skills and competences, work experience, cognitive and practical skills, including skills for which no certificates are available.

The procedure helps

- to raise awareness of clients for their competences and to describe them in German
- to provide counsellors with information and orientation that enables them to place the clients in labour market or education
- to draft measures and individual pathways to labour market integration

Methods and procedure:

Preparation of the interview:

- Counsellor: collection of all available information on the country of origin and qualifications of the client
- Client: collecting and chronological sorting of all available proof of evidence or documents demonstrating their own professional development

Interview:

- Interview questionnaire covers 3 parts: personal data, formal qualification, professional experience and employment
- Identification of important working areas and relevant starting points for the future
- Conversation in simple and clear sentences, but using as well technical terms

Revision, control:

- Immediate documentation of discussion results in the questionnaire
- Afterwards revision and correction done by the counsellor
- Check with the client and at the same time clarification of German technical terms

Publication, analysis:

- By systematically documenting the professional competences the counselling process is taking advantage of data and facts. This provides the basis for further counselling with a focus on labour market integration

Documentation of the results: Profile of professional competences; proof of professional experience, cognitive and practical skills

Duration: approx. 3.5 hours

³⁶ Example of online questionnaire see: <http://kompetenzen-gesundheitsberufe.de/kompetenzen/der-fragebogen/> (2016-11-03)

Preconditions for participation: Motivation to reflect one's interests and professional career. Basic knowledge in German is required, the procedure can also be passed with an interpreter

Target group: Jobseekers especially with scientific engineering qualifications; the procedure is transferable

Developed by: IQ-Teilprojekt „Mit Energie in die berufliche Zukunft“, LIFE e.V./ KUMULUS-PLUS (2010)

4.2 Competence tool kit – competence bilancing for migrants in groups (*Kompetenzenkoffer – Kompetenzbilanzierung für Migranten und Migrantinnen in der Gruppe*)³⁷

Aims: Identification, estimation and assessment of formal, non-formal and informal competences (social and personal competences, methodical expertise, professional skills, competences acquired in school, education or social context). The “*Kompetenzenkoffer*” is part of the „competence bilancing“ (*Kompetenzbilanz*) which was originally developed for refugees and asylum seekers in 2005 to make their skills and competences visible and to document them.

Methods and procedure:

Workshops with max. 12 participants and 2 coaches. The „*Kompetenzenkoffer*“ includes methods and material that can be used for competence audit in the group, e.g. interviews, role plays, presentations etc.; The workshops are structured in 8 modules:

Module 1: Kick-off and getting to know each other

Module 2: Presentation of the competence audit, preparation, explanation, examples

Module 3: Identifying and classifying competences

Module 4: Fine-tuning of the classification of competences

Module 5: Social network

Module 6: This is me, these are my competences

Module 7: Realisation: making wishes, dreams, aims concrete and find ways

Module 8: Further steps: individual interview and transfer

Depending on the requirements it is possible to use self- or external assessment methods.

Instruments: questionnaire; portfolio for competence audit

Duration: 8 modules à 2-2.5 hours and a final meeting

Target group: Adult migrants searching for a job, professional reorientation or aiming at further professional development; Developed for women, but transferable

Preconditions for participation: Participation with limited language skills in German is possible (using dictionaries, translations, support offered by the group etc.)

Development: „*Kompetenzenkoffer*“ has been developed in the context of the project empowerMi (2005-2007) by the development partnership MigraNet.

³⁷ Kompetenzenkoffer: <http://www.tuerantuer.de/integrationsprojekte/empowermi/der-kompetenzenkoffer.html>
Kompetenzbilanz: http://www.equal-sepa.de/material/Produkte/material/PG1_Kompetenzbilanz.pdf (2016-11-10)

4.3 Competence panorama for migrants (*KompetenzenPanorama für Migrantinnen und Migranten*)³⁸

Aims: Documentation of formal, non-formal and informal competences from different learning contexts (profession, family, social background etc.); formulation of realistic professional aims; transfer of the acquired competences into professional activities.

Function: empowerment, professional orientation; qualification counselling based on self- and external reflection; The „*KompetenzenPanorama*“ combines competence balancing with an analysis of the potential and the outside image of a person.

Methods and procedure:

During the informational interview the counsellor and the client agree on a schedule. The competence panorama is reworked independently by the client and eventually in the mother tongue of the client. During the guidance session the clients' work is discussed and transferred into the competence and language profile.

5 modules are worked through:

Module 1: About my life – who am I?

Identifying competences acquired in the clients' life

Module 2: My competences – what am I able to do?

Collecting data, facts and competences of formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts

Module 3: The panorama of my competences – documentation.

Transferring identified competences in a competence-, language- and intercultural profile (based on self- and external assessment, collection of all evidence)

Module 4: My professional future – which steps do I have to make?

Formulating professional aims, reflecting own competences, defining time schedule for professional aims and qualification measures

Module 5: My labour market portfolio

Creating a CV, selecting labour market relevant evidence, preparing the application procedure

Documentation of results: e.g. draft of the competence profile and the labour market portfolio (CV, check list of labour market relevant evidence of competence); If requested, it is also possible that the counsellor summarizes the results.

Duration: 4 sessions à 2 hours

Target group: Adult migrants with or without professional qualification that are looking for professional orientation and qualification measures; The procedure can be applied for groups and individuals.

Preconditions for participation: Practical experience shows that working with the competence panorama is in principle also possible for people with little language knowledge in German if the counsellor supports the client, but language knowledge at A2 level is required.

Development: InnoVision Concepts GmbH, TP MigraNet of the EQUAL development partnership (2007)

³⁸ See: <http://www.tuerantuer.de/images/stories/projekte/Fluequal/leitfaden%20fluequal.pdf> (2016-11-10)

4.4 KomBI-Laufbahnberatung³⁹

Aims: Identification and documentation of formal, non-formal and informal competences (social and personal competence, methodological expertise, professional competences or personal values)

Methods and procedure: identification of competences combined with competence oriented, biographical and intercultural career guidance based on:

- Biographical work: experience in the professional field, education, leisure time and family
- Activity analysis: describing step by step what has been done in this field of activity
- Evidence of competence: description of competences and proof of evidence
- Formulation of next steps and aims

Instruments: different tools which vary with regard to methodology, intensity, extent, time effort etc. (e.g. formulation of interests, using „strength cards“)

Documentation of results: Prototype for the documentation of competences

Duration: 3-4 coaching sessions à 2 hours + 10 hours individual post processing

Target group: Migrants interested in developing professional perspectives for the future

Preconditions for participation: language knowledge at level B1 (B2 in speaking practice) is recommended. The inclusion of native speaker as coach has proven to be effective.

Development: The instrument was developed in the context of the national funding programme IQ by the cooperation partners GAB München, PerformPartner, Tür an Tür – Integrationsprojekte, VIA – Verein für interkulturelle Arbeit, Sozialreferat der Landeshauptstadt München (2008-2014)

4.5 Assessment for the identification of competences for migrants (*Assessment der Kompetenzfeststellung für MigrantInnen*)⁴⁰

Aims: Identification, assessment and documentation of formal, non-formal and informal competences (social and personal competences, methodological expertise, professional competences; generic competences necessary for entering a German working environment), based on a concrete job requirement and in the context of an assessment centre to make it easier for migrants to enter into professional life in Germany.

Methods and procedure:

³⁹ See: <http://kombi-laufbahnberatung.de/> (2016-11-03)

⁴⁰ See: http://www.netzwerk-iq.de/fileadmin/Redaktion/Downloads/IQ_Publikationen/Thema_Anerkennung/2011_LIFE-Booklet-3.pdf
Report of the project „Give competence a chance“ on the transfer of this approach into European co-operations „Assessmentcenter für den Berufseinstieg von Migrantinnen“ (2011):
http://digital.zlb.de/viewer/content?action=application&sourcepath=15666015/2011_10_life_gcac_web.pdf&format=pdf (2016-10-25)

In the assessment sessions a simulation of typical critical situations in working life takes place. The assessment centres are structured as follows:

Orientation:

- Introduction of the participants (approximately 1 hour orientation programme)

Observation:

- Explanation of the observation criteria
- Presentation and execution of the assessment tasks (e.g. team situations, role play, presentations)
- During the execution of the assessment tasks the actions and statements are documented by two observers
- Afterwards the participants fill in a form and declare their self-assessment

Assessment and reflection:

- Self-assessment of the participants
- Evaluation and documentation of the observers (conference report)
- Individual feedback: bringing together the results of self- and external assessment
- Finishing the assessment centre and receiving a certificate

Instruments: Description of the tasks for participants, role description and briefing of the actors, information on duration, room and material requirements etc.

Documentation of results: Certificate (overall profile) with documentation of competences

Duration: 4.5 days

Target group: Migrants with or without professional qualification before they enter a profession in a specific professional field

Preconditions for participation: Basic knowledge in German is required

Development: LIFE e.V. (2006)

Good practice examples focussing on “language aspects”:

4.6 Competence cards

Aims: job market integration of (e.g. low-skilled) migrants by analysing their potential and informally and non-formally acquired competences.

Methods and procedure:

Cards with visual representations of competences were developed particularly to help with the recording of immigrants' competences. By combining image and text in simple language, the access to people seeking advice should be facilitated and language barriers be overcome.

Consultants can apply the cards flexibly in the counselling process.

There are 46 competence cards in the fields of social, personal, professional and methodological competences as well as some interest cards, in-depth cards and cards with further references. Each card shows a picture with a sentence in simple German that is being translated in English, French, Russian, Arabic and Turkish. This side of the card is being directed to the clients, while the backside is addressed to the consultants. On the cards' back, there is further explanations and questions about competences and other remarks.

Competence cards allow

- a quick conduct with little expenditure of time

- a self-explanatory and simple handling
- access to clients independent of their German language abilities

Option 1: Competence cards can be used to start the conversation and to begin a competence check.

Option 2: They can help to assess competences. Either the clients pick the cards that describe their strengths best or cards of just one competence area are being used. Here, the consultant is inquiring about each competence.

Option 3: The set of cards can be used as the start of a potential analysis.

Option 4: Another option is to apply the competence cards to determine strengths used in the profiling of job agencies and centres.⁴¹

4.7 JobFit⁴²

Aims: Vocational and qualification orientation; The measure combines occupational German language tuition with an assessment of professional competences (formal, non-formal, informal competences) in an internship.

Methods and procedure: 5 modules (including an internship)

Module 1: individually conducted first meeting, recording of data

Module 2: occupational German language course (including tests)

Module 3: assessment of competences (interview, assessment centre, application check)

Module 4: internship in a company with local support

Module 5: evaluation of the outcome – individual and group talks with participants, outlook to possible further professional development

Documentation of results: Oral and written feedback: e.g. detailed CV, written evaluation of on-the-job-competences, confirmation of participation

Duration: 2 to max. 3 months

Target group: Unemployed people with migration background from the age of 25 who have access to the labour market.

Preconditions for participation: German language level of A2/B1 and motivation is required. In case of insufficient language knowledge participants are offered language courses in advance.⁴³

Development: genres e.V., transferstelle am ifdm

4.8 SIQua24 (language-integration-qualification; web aided on request; online 24 hours)⁴⁴

⁴¹ See: <https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/de/unsere-projekte/weiterbildung-fuer-alle/projektnachrichten/kompetenzkarten/> (2016-10-31)

⁴² See: http://www.migranet.org/images/Publikationen/2008_Praxishandreichung.pdf (2016-10-31)

⁴³ See: http://www.esf.de/portal/SharedDocs/PDFs/DE/Leitlinien/2015_12_17_Praxishandreichung.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2 (2016-10-31)

⁴⁴ See: https://arbeitsmarktmonitor.arbeitsagentur.de/asyl_und_integrations/siqua24-sprache-integrations-qualifikation-auf-wuns/ (2016-10-31)

Aims: Integration of refugees into society and preparation for entering the labour market

Methods and procedure: The project offers German language courses (including specialized terminology) and support to acquire intercultural competences as well as professional skills through practical work in workshops

Module 1: Getting to know each other: selection process and training of four liaison people

Module 2: Orientation and interview: placement test language proficiency and manual skills; recording of existing qualifications; clarification of inner motivation

Module 3: Qualification language and profession: technical vocabulary; expressions in the workshop; moral code

Module 4: Integration support: creating application material; handling the job exchange; moral code in working life and society; acquisition of traineeships, support and reflexion

Duration: 4 months

Target group: Refugees in the region of Fulda

Development: BBZ-Mitte

4.9 Competence team refugees (*Kompetenzteam Flüchtlinge*)⁴⁵

Aims: Assessment of potential, competences and German language proficiency, occupational counselling

Methods and procedure:

Potential and competences as well as German language abilities are being evaluated at the beginning, while later on, participants receive individual support. In addition to that, counselling and job placement services are offered, aiming at employers who want to hire refugees, for example.

Target group: Asylum seekers and tolerated people with temporary residence status

Development: Responsible organisation: Employment Agency Neu-Ulm (Agentur für Arbeit Neu-Ulm); Network partners: support circle (Helferkreis), district office/immigration office (Landratsamt/Ausländeramt), Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit)

Good practice examples at national and federal state (*Bundesland*) level⁴⁶:

⁴⁵ See: https://arbeitsmarktmonitor.arbeitsagentur.de/asyl_und_integrations/kompetenzteam-fluechtlinge-agentur-fur-arbeit-neu-u/ (2016-10-23)

⁴⁶ Besides the projects that focus on competence identification, documentation and assessment, there exists a huge variety of qualification, training as well as recruiting oriented projects in Germany. Bavarian examples are for instance: the initiative „*Pass(t) genau für Flüchtlinge*“ which offers support for enterprises and trainees with regard to education and training placement of young refugees: <https://www.kolpingmuenchen.de/ausbildung/berufsausbildung/passtgenau-und-passtgenau-fuer-fluechtlinge-ausbildungsunterstuetzung> (2016-11-16); the project „*Flüchtlinge in Beruf und Schule*“ offers unaccompanied minors the possibility to acquire a qualification at secondary I school level by offering additional support in learning German, vocational orientation and starting a vocational training: <https://www.mvhs.de/programm/verlinkungen/projekte/projekt-flueb-s-fluechtlinge-in-beruf-und-schule/> (2016-11-16).

4.10 Identifying Competences – Arriving Well in Niedersachsen (*Kompetenzen erkennen – gut ankommen in Niedersachsen*)⁴⁷

Aims: Identify competences of asylum seekers and refugees and offer them labour market counselling in first reception facilities in Niedersachsen; introduce asylum seekers and refugees according to their qualifications as soon as possible to the labour market.

Methods and procedure:

First step: asylum seekers and refugees talk with social services about their outlooks and perspectives in the first reception facilities. During these talks, their qualification potential is being identified.

Second step: asylum seekers' and refugees' competences are extensively evaluated

Third step: asylum seekers with a presumably higher chance of a positive asylum application are then redirected to the Public Employment Service, they are part of the regular placing process of the Public Employment Service including support and assistance through the 4-phases-model (Profiling, setting of goals, choosing an action strategy and its implementation).

Target group: Asylum seekers and refugees

Development: Responsible organisations: Regional Management Niedersachsen-Bremen (Regionaldirektion), Ministry of Economy, Labour and Transport Niedersachsen (Ministerium Wirtschaft, Arbeit und Verkehr)

4.11 Qualification analysis and “Prototyping Transfer – Vocational recognition based on qualification analysis”⁴⁸

Aims: Recognizing foreign training qualifications when documents are missing.

Methods and procedure: Depending on what kind of professional qualifications a participant intends to recognise, there are different kinds of qualification analysis: expert discussion/interview, work samples or trial work.

Target group: People with foreign training qualifications who are not able to prove their educational achievement with documents.

Preconditions for participation: German language knowledge is required, the use of dictionaries or inclusion of translators is possible.

⁴⁷ See: https://arbeitsmarktmonitor.arbeitsagentur.de/asyl_und_integration/kompetenzen-erkennen-gut-ankommen-in-niedersachsen/ (2016-10-23)

⁴⁸ See: <https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/> (2016-10-25)

Country fiche: Italy

1 General information on refugee situation

With close to 160,000 arrivals in 2016, Italy could surpass Greece as Europe's major migrant and refugee point of entry this year. The country has been on the migrant crisis frontline for more than a decade and it is now taking the lead in combating smuggling and trying to identify the growing number of people who die on their way through the Mediterranean crossing.

The “Mare Nostrum” operation was launched by the Italian authorities as a “military and humanitarian” operation in the Channel of Sicily immediately after another tragic shipwreck that occurred on 3 October 2013 near the Lampedusa coast, in order to prevent the increasing number of deaths of migrants at sea. This operation, initiated officially on 18 October 2013, aimed at strengthening surveillance and patrols on the high seas as well as to increase search and rescue activities. It provided for the deployment of personnel and equipment of the Italian navy, army, air force, custom police, coast guards and other institutional bodies. Mare Nostrum ended in October 2014 and was succeeded by Operation Triton under the leadership of the EU border agency Frontex. This operation brings together border guard authorities and assets from 25 Member States and is hosted by Italy.

In Italy, according to the European Agenda on migration, the approach accommodating refugees and asylum seekers changed during the summer of 2015. The new policy has a focus on control and sharing of responsibilities with other EU member states. Unfortunately, this new approach could not help the Italian authorities in managing the enormous humanitarian emergency.

1.1 Developments since 2015

In 2015, more than 120,000 refugees arrived at Italian coasts. Moreover, the country got nearly 90,000 asylum requests – a boom of arrivals that Italy cannot succeed in managing both from a housing and health point of view. The emergency situation was highlighted by the international organization *Médecins Sans Frontières*, which on the basis of research and surveys identified not only the lack of access of most migrants to general health services but also the increasing number of makeshift accommodation (such as camps, isolated and crumbling buildings, huts) used as a refuge.

The SPRAR system

The System for Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) consists of a network of managing entities that set up and run reception projects for people forced to migrate. At a local level the managing entity, with the valued support of the third sector (non-profit organizations, NGOs), ensures an "integrated reception" that goes well beyond the mere provision of board and lodging, but includes orientation measures, legal and social assistance as well as the development of personalized programs for the social-economic integration of the beneficiaries.

Generally, the SPRAR projects are small to medium sized projects. The coordinative body checks regularly if the projects comply with the minimum criteria as laid down in the SPRAR guidelines. A wide range of services is offered, ranging from legal support to professional education, to help with finding independent accommodation.

SPRAR's main objective is to take responsibility for those beneficiaries accepted into the scheme and to provide them with personalized programs to help them (re)acquire self-autonomy, and to take part in and integrate effectively into Italian society, in terms of finding employment and housing, access to local services, social life and education.

In Italy, the way in which asylum seekers and refugees are received by the local councils has been changed in August 2015. The decree⁴⁹, published in the Official Journal aims to overcome the current dual system (temporary structures in centres for assistance to migrants on the one hand, and on the other SPRAR). In particular, there are two main areas which concern the introduction of:

1. A permanent access system
 - local authorities already holding SPRAR planning, if nearing completion, will be able to apply for continuation;
 - local authorities who want to create new SPRAR projects may submit their applications at any time of the year;
 - a special standing committee will evaluate the applications twice a year.
2. New functions and methods of SPRAR operation
 - two annual rankings of starting dates for both new projects and for the continuation of those already active;
 - financing by the ministry of up to 95 % of the project cost;
 - permanent commission of verification of continuation applications and assessment of new applications for access;
 - the use of figures provided by an external auditor to the institution's protection owner in control of administrative procedures;
 - the possibility, during the three years of activity, to submit variations to funded reception services.

1.2 Data on refugees

At least 118,047 refugees came to Italy in 2015. There has been a growth by 26 % since 2014. (UNHCR). In particular, 83,970 requested asylum – a growth by 32 % since 2014.

The 5 biggest countries of origin are: Nigeria 18,174, Pakistan 10,403, Gambia 8,022, Senegal 6,386 and Bangladesh 6,056.⁵⁰

The composition of asylum seekers in Italy is, on average, different from the one present in the other EU countries; the share of women and children was very small in 2014: 7.6 % women, and 6.8 % children – in the same year the EU-average was 29.7 % women and 25.5 % children (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 82). A reason is that only few women and children take the very dangerous route via the Mediterranean to flee to Europe.

2 Important actors

Support services in Italy are differentiated into two phases of assistance: first assistance for refugees who only just arrived at Italian shore, that provide emergency support; and a second

⁴⁹ For more information on the decree see:

http://www.sprar.it/index.php?option=com_k2&view=latest&layout=latest&Itemid=435 (2016-09-30)

⁵⁰ Information from Ministero dell'Interno:

http://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/modulistica/riepilogo_dati_2014_2015.pdf (2016-09-30)

phase of assistance for asylum seekers and refugees that are more focused on programmes for integration.

Support services: first assistance

The first assistance is provided by the centres for assistance to migrants (CDA *Centri di accoglienza* /CAS *Centri d'accoglienza straordinaria*/ CPSA *Centri di primo soccorso e accoglienza*). In these centres migrants received emergency support, food, dress, medical assistance, linguistic support, which was frequently provided by NGOs like, for instance, “*Medices sans frontiers*”, Save the children, Caritas, Italian Consortium for Solidarity, the Italian Council for Refugees, and Pastorale Migranti (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016, 80).

Extraordinary accommodation measures

According to the crucial geographic position of Italy, the accommodation system for the refugees has not been able to grow in accordance to the law from 2015. For the continuously arriving of refugees the first assistance phase in the CAS continues for all the procedure of international recognitions. NGOs that manage the accommodation are experienced in the field of welfare and cooperate in order to help with the integration of refugees. There exists a plurality of networks between the NGOs and institutions – public and private – for job orientation, education or volunteering.

Support services: second phase of assistance – management of assistance and integration

CARA (*Centri di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo*): centres for the assistance of asylum seekers managed by the government through local prefects, which use public or private structure in large, general buildings. Now they are called HUB.

SPRAR (*Sistema di Protezione dei Richiedenti Asilo*) which is based upon projects financed by the National Fund for Policies and Asylum Services (FNPSA) and which is run by Municipality Association (ANCI) and by non-governmental associations (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 84f.).

Governmental level

Ministero dell'Interno: <http://www.interno.gov.it/it>

Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali: <http://www.lavoro.gov.it>

Ministero della Salute: <http://www.salute.gov.it>

Protezione Civile: <http://www.protezionecivile.gov.it>

NGOs – national

Croce Rossa Italiana: <http://www.cri.it>

Centro Astalli - Jesuit Refugee Service: <http://centroastalli.it>

Save the Children Italia: <http://www.savethechildren.it>

Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII: <http://www.apg23.org>

Associazione Studi Giuridici Immigrazione: <http://www.asgi.it>

Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati: <http://www.cir-onlus.org>

Comunità di Sant'Egidio: <http://www.santegidio.org>

Caritas Italiana: <http://www.caritasitaliana.it>

Consiglio italiano rifugiati: <http://www.cir-onlus.org/it/>

NGOs – international

OIM: <http://www.italy.iom.int>

UNHCR: <https://www.unhcr.it>

Validation

3 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

3.1 SPRAR

Regarding the Minimum Service guaranteed from the Managing Entity of the SPRAR projects in the area of education and professional requalification, the managing entity should:

- valorise the beneficiaries' backgrounds, taking into account their expectations;
- orientate the beneficiaries to professional training and requalification in order to encourage the acquisition of new competences;
- facilitate the recognition of degrees and professional qualifications and encourage enrolment to university.

Asylum seekers or beneficiaries of international protection accommodated in the SPRAR system are generally supported in their integration process, by means of individualised projects which include vocational training and internships.

The main instruments used in the SPRAR project for recording and evaluating refugees' competences are⁵¹:

Bilancio delle competenze (Skills assessment)

It points to reconstruct the personal knowledge in terms of skills, experience, interests, hobbies, attitudes and aspirations. It requires specific methodologies and techniques, e.g. self-assessment questionnaires, focus on personal biography, analysis of past experiences, simulations and tests.

The skills assessment generally is structured in three phases:

- Preliminary phase: analysis of personal aspirations and needs, in order to focus the individual goals;
- Investigation phase: analysis of skills and competences;
- Conclusion phase: synthesis and definition of strengths and weaknesses, in order to create a plan of action to reach the goals.

This process requires that the participant already knows the language and support of a specialized professional.

Certificazione delle competenze (Skills certification)

The certification of skills is a process of testing and evaluating by which it is possible to recognize skills, competences and qualifications needed for social and economic inclusion. The law n° 92/2012, so called *Fornero reform*, and the subsequent decree n°13/2013 has established a national system of certification of skills, the definition of general rules and basic levels of performance in order to identify and validate the competences acquired in formal and non-formal contexts.

Curriculum vitae

The curriculum vitae, if well structured, contributes to job orientation in a sense of self-empowerment, helping the person to better know his/her goals and to have a presentation tool for contacts with employers.

⁵¹ For more information see: http://www.sprar.eu/images/SPRAR_TU_Integrazione_2016.pdf (2016-11-15)

Vocational training

Asylum seekers have the possibility to attend professional training courses, sometimes organized by the local authority that manages their housing project. Each local project within SPRAR has to establish and consolidate a relationship with the local training institution to verify the training possibilities and organize a partnership to facilitate the participation to the courses. The most common fields of training courses are tourism and restaurants; it is also possible to attend a training in agriculture, fisheries, crafts, informatics, industry, building and trade. Among these training opportunities it is also possible to attend an apprenticeship or a job exchange in the above mentioned fields of work.

In the SPRAR database⁵² there are no good practices in the specific field of recording and evaluating refugees' competences. But there are good practices regarding their orientation, vocational training and job placement, socio-cultural and economic inclusion. Some interesting examples are:

- Help desk that provides legal advice and service orientation to asylum seekers arriving from first and second reception centres;
- Realization of an orientation guide to promote access to services for female refugees;
- Realization of a training course on orientation and health information;
- Agreements with private companies for the activation of internships;
- Agreement with the National Association of Migrant Families (ANFE) for career guidance;
- Collaboration with a vocational training institute to verify the professional competencies (project in the city of Udine).

In addition, SPRAR has implemented standardised integration programmes. Asylum seekers or beneficiaries of international protection accommodated in the SPRAR system are generally supported in their integration process, by means of individualised projects which include vocational training and internships.

In Italy, a critical issue remains the shortage of integration programmes addressed to both asylum seekers and refugees. Moreover, it must be pointed out that there is a considerable difference of opportunities in accessing integration programmes depending on the services provided by the local reception centres where asylum seekers are accommodated (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b 81f.).

3.2 INSIDE

A new pilot programme named **INSIDE** was implemented in 2015 and will continue until 2020. It is designed for holder of international protection and the programme is supposed to provide a mix of active labour-market policy services and improving individual skills to enhance employability (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 89).

The project is funded by a national fund for migration (*Fondo politiche migratorie FPM*) that foresees the realization of approximately 700 internships in favour of refugees settled in the SPRAR reception system. The project is coordinated by the Italian General Directorate of Immigration and Integration Policies – Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

The main activities of the project foresee:

- Skills profiling;

⁵² See: www.sprar.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=109:buone-prassi&catid=87&Itemid=567 (2016-10-13)

- Offering of a personalised set of active labour market policies (tutoring, counselling, career guidance, orientation, vocational training, internships);
- Offering of an allowance to intermediary societies providing job orientation and active labour market services, to enterprises for the tutoring of internship activities, to refugees for attending the internships;
- Job scouting, job searching, coaching.

3.3 Support by PES, COL and for recognition

Refugees and asylum seekers have access to the PES-offices (*Centri per l'Impiego*) like natives or labour migrants. These offices provide information on the job market, skill mapping for the candidate, counselling and advice on the most appropriate training courses organized by the regional government. Foreign nationals can also apply for a stage or a training course in a firm, which should give them a better idea of their ability and of the investment required to meet employers' demands (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 88).

The Italian Council for Refugees (*Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati, CIR*) collaborates with the Centre for Work Orientation (*Centro di Orientamento al Lavoro, COL*), a bureau under the Municipality of Rome, aiming at providing refugees and asylum seekers with vocational training opportunities. Once the Social Service Office of CIR identifies an asylum seeker or refugee who fulfils the requirements (knowledge of the Italian language and the possibility to work as prescribed by law), it refers the person concerned to the COL.

COL has, in particular, two main tasks: It elaborates a specific integration path for each person through interviews, examination of their CV, an evaluation of their motivations and competences (skills profiling). Besides this, it monitors jobs or training vacancies within the territory of Rome so as to create a notice board to collect all information. After these preliminary steps, COL should be able to offer refugees the most suitable trainings or jobs for their situation.

With regard to the type of vocational trainings, there are different forms and lengths. The length of the trainings may vary depending on the available funding. Usually these trainings require 20, 25 or 30 hours of attendance per week, for a period of three up to six months; they rarely amount to more than 30 hours per week (CIR, ECRE 2015, 81).

Recognition of previous learning and exploring the possibility of a national exam to get the Italian certificate is an option for refugees if original certificates have been lost: The Ministry of Education organizes free evening courses at local level for these exams, but these are not specifically for refugees and are attended mainly by foreign nationals. Italian knowledge is key in order to have skills and competences recognised which is often a problem for recently incoming refugees and asylum seekers (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 89).

Today in Italy there are two main services: the first is a service provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that allows to obtain a "Declaration of value" for refugees; the second is by *Cimea*, Italian Centre of information, about the recognition policy that is being used since 1984 with the Ministry of Education and awards a "Certificates of compatibility of foreign qualifications" for free.

Cimea, considering the extraordinary and growing number of refugees and migrants moving towards Italy and Europe, has decided to activate independently a national coordination on evaluation of qualifications, an informal network of experts in the administrative sector in order to share good practices, problems and solutions about evaluating qualifications.

High schools, in order to recognize prior learning, can refer to Enic-Naric centre⁵³ and to good practices established at international level. If documents are not available, it is possible to evaluate the skills of each refugee and the declaration through written exam, interview or practice test.

⁵³ See: <http://www.enic-naric.net/italy.aspx> (2016-11-15)

Country fiche: Norway

1 General information on refugee situation

Ever since Norway introduced new, tougher guidelines for their asylum policies in November 2015, the number of refugees coming to Norway has gone down rapidly in comparison to the rest of the year. Still, the tendency of people applying for asylum in Norway has been rising continuously for the last 15 years. Refugees make out 15 % of the total non-Nordic immigration in Norway.⁵⁴

1.1 Developments since 2015

In 2015, Norway received 31,145 applications for asylum. That number was three-times as high as the four last years. 2016 has seen a decline in the numbers and by the end of August only 2,248 applications were registered. Traditionally there has been a steady influx of young people from countries like Afghanistan, Iraq and Eritrea, but in 2015 the increase came especially from Syria.

1.2 Data on refugees

Traditionally the largest groups of refugees have come from Afghanistan, Eritrea and Iraq, countries in turmoil because of war or national regulation that makes life hard for young people. Eritrea has a conscription law that makes life dangerous for anyone not silently complying. In 2015 the five largest groups came from (1) Syria, (2) Afghanistan, (3) Iraq, (4) Eritrea and (5) Iran.

In 2015, a total number of 10,448 people from Syria was applying for asylum in Norway, 7,000 from Afghanistan and 3,001 from Iraq. As mentioned above, the numbers have dropped since 2016: In 2016 year, 434 refugees came from Syria, 320 from Afghanistan and 184 from Iraq. This makes in total a number of 2,848 women and 8,034 men from Syria, 1,189 women and 6,131 men from Afghanistan and 804 women and 2,381 men from Iraq.

In the years of 2015 and 2016 combined, 2,817 minors from Syria applied for asylum in Norway among which 593 were unaccompanied. Looking at the same data for Afghanistan, it shows that 4,516 underage refugees were coming to Norway out of which 3,652 came there on their own. For Iraq, it was 844 minors in total, 89 of them unaccompanied.⁵⁵

2 Labour market situation

In Norway, in general the labour market situation is characterised by the low unemployment rate and the high participation of both men and women. However, the level of employment among refugees is quite low as the duration of their stay plays such an important role for their

⁵⁴ See: <http://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/artikler-og-publikasjoner/refugees-in-norway> (2016-10-16)

⁵⁵ Information collected at: <https://www.udi.no/en/statistics-and-analysis/> (2016-10-16)

employment. Still, refugees are much more likely to earn less than others even after years of residence in Norway.⁵⁶

The NAV (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Organization) offers its regular services to migrants, but also focuses on this group of people by providing additional services specifically designed for them. Apart from the NAV, the Ministry of Children and Equality, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) as well as the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) play an important role regarding the labour market situation of migrants by working on their inclusion into the labour market.

Asylum seekers are eligible for a work permit for up to six months (that can be renewed) in Norway if they meet certain criteria like being able to identify themselves or being over the age of 18. However, as most of the refugees are unable to confirm their identity, very few are able to receive a work permit while waiting for their application for asylum to be processed. However, in 2016 regulations on early work-start were revised and opened up for more work-possibilities in the application period (see chapter 4.6).

When refugees receive a work and residence permit, they have access to hiring subsidies, self employment support, unemployment benefits and other labour market support. In the second quarter of 2014, about 15,000 people were actively involved in active labour market services – among which 43% were migrants.

In contrast to other third-country nationals, refugees are obliged to take part in the Introduction Programme (see 4.1) and therefore mainly are unemployed for the first year they are in Norway. However, in 2013, 47% of the participants gained access to the labour market or education after completing the Introduction Programme (DG EMPL 2016c, 1-7).

In May 2016, the social partners agreed on a declaration on faster integration of immigrants with refugee background into working life. They want to facilitate a quick track for refugees into the labour market including and secure continuous monitoring, training and competence development.

3 Important actors

Governmental level

Ministry of Children and Equality (BLD): <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld/id298/>

Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI): <https://www.udi.no/en/>

Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi): <http://www.imdi.no/en/>

Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir):

https://bufdir.no/en/English_start_page/

Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV): <https://www.nav.no/en/Home>

Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning (VOX): <http://www.vox.no/English/>

Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT):

<http://www.nokut.no/en/Foreign-education/NOKUTs-recognition-procedures/>

NGOs

The Norwegian Red Cross and their youth branch Red Cross Youth:

<https://www.rodekors.no/en/om-rode-kors/red-cross-in-english/>

⁵⁶ See: <http://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/artikler-og-publikasjoner/refugees-in-norway> (2016-10-16)

The Norwegian Refugee Council: <https://www.nrc.no/>
Refugees Welcome to Norway: <http://rwtn.no/en/>
Save The Children Norway: <https://www.reddbarna.no/om-oss/english>
Norwegian People's Aid: <https://www.npaid.org/Our-Work/Refugees-and-Integration>
Hero: <http://hero.no/en/>
Refugee Foundation (*Flyktningstiftelsen*): <http://fst.no/>

Training providers

All municipalities should provide introduction programmes in cooperation with NAV.

Validation

The **Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training** has the overall responsibility for the guidelines regarding recognition of prior learning⁵⁷ and for recognition of foreign vocational education and training⁵⁸.

Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) is the responsible body for recognition of higher education⁵⁹, but offers a possibility for recognition of some vocational education as well.⁶⁰

4 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

4.1 The Introduction Programme

Target group are refugees between the age of 16 to 55 who recently received a residence permit in Norway as well as their families. Migrants over 55 may also have the opportunity to participate in this training.

Training duration: up to 2 years, can be extended to 3

Training targets:

- Helping to take part in working life
- Facilitate access to education
- Increase financial independence

Description of Training:

Refugees aged 16 to 55 are obliged to take part in The Introduction Programme, consisting of “Norwegian language training and social studies” of 600 hours to be eligible for a permanent residence permit.

By figuring out the participants’ training needs, individual plans are developed to help refugees find a job and/or education. Participants receive some financial aid during the time of the training that is provided to them free of charge (DG EMPL 2016c, 8f.).

⁵⁷ See: http://www.udir.no/contentassets/2d44dd1eca5f4449a314a4c541ae75e2/retningslinjer_realkomp_vgo.pdf (2016-11-14)

⁵⁸ See: <http://www.udir.no/in-english/assessment-and-recognition-of-foreign-vocational-education-and-training/> (2016-11-14)

⁵⁹ See: <http://www.nokut.no/en/Foreign-education/NOKUTs-general-recognition/> (2016-11-14)

⁶⁰ See: <http://www.nokut.no/en/Foreign-education/Vocational-education-and-training/> (2016-11-14)

4.2 Job Opportunity (*jobbsjansen*)

Target group are not refugees that newly came to Norway, but migrants between 18 and 55 years – in particular women – who require basic qualifications, do not hold an active role in the labour market and do not receive any social benefits or are not part of any language or labour market training.

Training targets

- Strengthening of basic skills
- Increasing employment

Like The Introduction Programme, this programme is adapted to personal needs. Its aim is to give migrants better opportunities to participate in the labour market, to train their language skills and to teach them about “Norwegian social conditions”.⁶¹

4.3 Self-registration of competences (*Selvregistrering av kompetansee*)

Target group: refugees from the age of 16.

Training targets

- Career counselling
- Labour market integration and possibility to provide for themselves and their family
- Better match between labour-market needs and qualifications

Description of Training

This self-registration tool allows refugees on a voluntary basis to self-register their language skills, education (level and profession), work experiences (type and length), digital competences, certificates and other relevant information. The results will be used for career counselling and to facilitate quick integration into the labour market or education right from the beginning.⁶² The self-registration tool is an online scheme (app) and creates the basis for further information on refugees to be used in different contexts with government agencies. To guarantee easy access for everyone, the scheme is translated into the 13 most common languages among asylum seekers in Norway. A first version of the tool was developed in 2016 and tested in two refugee centres; further implementation will be decided in 2017.

4.4 White Paper on Adult Education

Target group: adults with poor education, poor basic skills or adults whose skills are not acknowledged officially. Particular focus is also placed on migrants.

Training duration

Vocational training: 2 years

Training targets

- Strengthening of basic skills

⁶¹ See: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/immigration/integrering/introduksjonslov-og-arbeid/jobbsjansen/id2343473/> (2016-10-09)

⁶² See: <http://www.vox.no/om-vox/presse/kortere-vei-fra-asylmottak-til-jobb/> (2016-10-08)

- Facilitate access to education
- Facilitate access to the labour market
- Recognition of basic skills
- Improving measures for migrants

Description of Training

To enable more adults to participate actively on the labour market or to finish upper secondary education, it is essential to support adults in strengthening their basic skills. This should be done in future by introducing online training and offering a modular structured training specially designed for adults with low education and migrants.

To reach more adults to complete upper secondary education, a training consisting of different modules should be introduced. In addition to that, a vocational training that lasts for two years should ensure to give as many adults the possibility to enter the labour market as possible. Another focus is to support migrants to improve the training in Norwegian language and social studies, “The Introduction Act” and developing more measures, also working on facilitating the process for recognizing their skills.⁶³

4.5 NOKUT’s Qualifications Passport for Refugees

Target group: people not accepted for NOKUT’s general recognition⁶⁴, especially refugees with **higher education**.

Training targets

- Evaluate refugees’ competences
- Facilitate access to the labour market

Description of Training

The Qualification Passport for Refugees is a pilot project that ran from February to May in 2016. It showed that it is important to also focus on refugees with higher education and that it could be of interest to extend it.

The Qualifications Passport contains information on refugees’ skills, work experience and language skills evaluated by NOKUT as well as a section of advice and guidance for their future. The document is valid for three years.

The methodology used is based on the European Qualification Passport for Refugees developed by NOKUT and UK NARIC and the UVD-procedure⁶⁵ developed by NOKUT. It uses a combination of evaluating available documentation, and a structured interview with the applicant carried out by experienced case worker (NOKUT 2016, ii). The procedure is based on extensive oral and written testing with an expert committee, and thus requires the applicant to have proficiency in English, Norwegian or another Scandinavian language in order to communicate directly with the experts (ibid. 8).

⁶³ See: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/education/voksnes-laring-og-kompetanse/innsiktsartikler/opplaring-for-voksne/id2343654/> (2016-10-09)

⁶⁴ NOKUT’s general recognition is a procedure on a voluntary basis in which it is being assessed how a foreign education corresponds to one in the Norwegian educational system. See: <http://www.nokut.no/NOKUTs-general-recognition> (2016-10-16)

⁶⁵ This is a recognition procedure for persons with documentation that cannot be verified; the procedure is meant for applicants with foreign higher education. See: <http://www.nokut.no/en/Foreign-education/Other-recognition-systems/Recognition-Procedure-for-Persons-without-Verifiable-Documentation/> (2016-10-12)

The Qualifications Passport is not a legally binding document. This entails that the credibility of the information that forms the basis for the statement is not assessed as thoroughly as in ordinary decisions on general recognition, for example through verification from the educational institution (ibid. 15).

4.6 Early Work Start (*tidlig arbeidsstart*)

Target groups:

- a) personnel qualified for work in multinational companies with a minimum of three years of higher education,
- b) seamen and employees in multinational companies,
- c) trainees without completed vocational education and where the working life is a substantial part of their vocational training.

Training targets: trainees in companies

This arrangement opens up for employers in international companies to recruit personnel before application is processed, either qualified personnel with higher education or as trainees.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ See: https://www.udiregelverk.no/no/rettskilder/udi-rundskriv/rs-2016-003/#_Toc449361769

Country fiche: Portugal

1 General information on refugee situation

Portugal's geographical location is far away from the major migration routes of refugees and asylum seekers in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, and the country is not a particularly attractive final destination for refugees and asylum seekers.

In March 2016, the Portuguese newspaper *Publico* reported that "*Portugal responded favourably to the request of the European Commission and the European Asylum Support Office and exceptionally hosted a group of 64 refugees coming from Greece. These people join the 30 who came from Greece and Italy between December and February*".⁶⁷

All in all, so far, Portugal received 555 refugees in the framework of the European Agenda for Migration agreed with the European Union in September and in which it undertook to host 4,754 people within two years.

Furthermore, Portugal donated 7.2 million euros to support the refugees in Turkey.⁶⁸

1.1 Developments since 2015

Data from Eurostat show that only 872 persons applied for asylum in Portugal in 2015 (although a clear increase from 442 in 2014, but still at a very low level).

1.2 Data on refugees

Portugal has so far received 555 refugees under the replacement program for people who are in camps in Greece (372) and Italy (183), according to data released by the European Commission.⁶⁹ These refugees are mostly coming from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

2 Important actors

Governmental level

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is responsible for questions of national security and asylum. The **High Commission for Migration** (*Alto Comissariado Para Migrações*) primarily focuses on migration, although it also deals with refugees. The commission provides a welcome kit to refugees (focusing on language, orientation, connections and network) and promotes the Alcantara Program (see below), which was specifically launched in response to the current situation.

The **Council for Migration** (CM) and the **Commission for Equality and Against Racial Discrimination** (CICDR) are advisory groups of the High Commission for Migration (ACM).
<http://www.acm.gov.pt/acm>

⁶⁷ See: <https://www.publico.pt/sociedade/noticia/chegada-refugiados-em-dia-de-cimeira-representa-simbolicamente-a-solidariedade-de-portugal-1725416> (2016-10-03)

⁶⁸ See: <https://www.publico.pt/politica/noticia/portugal-doa-72-milhoes-de-euros-para-apoio-aos-refugiados-na-turquia-1745464> (2016-10-03)

⁶⁹ See: http://www.sabado.pt/mundo/detalhe/portugal_recebeu_555_refugiados_da_grecia_e_de_italia_num_ano.html (2016-10-03)

Regional level

Municipalities engage in assisting refugees in cooperation with NGOs and actors of the Refugee Support Platform (below), e.g. the Municipality of Lisbon cooperates with the Jesuit Refugee Service.

Civil Society

PAR – the Refugee Support Platform (<http://www.refugiados.pt/home-en/>) is a Portuguese network of organizations from civil society whose aim is to support hosting refugees during the current humanitarian crisis; each organization sharing this purpose is invited to participate. It was created in response to the current situation and has become by now one of the main actors of the Portuguese refugee aid network. There are numerous institutions collaborating in PAR all over the country (174 at the moment but the number is constantly growing), many of them are experienced humanitarian organisations with background in helping refugees and asylums seekers, while others are ‘newcomers’ in the field representing a totally different area, e.g. Portuguese start-up for foreign language exchange, media companies, etc. Given to its widespread network and the vast asset of all kinds of different experiences and know-how, PAR represents a multidisciplinary knowledge bank. PAR has been formally recognized by the Portuguese Government through a cooperation protocol and is a member of the Working Group for the Migration Agenda.

The **Association of Refugees in Portugal** is a non-profit organization which promotes the integration of the refugee population in Portugal. ARP promotes the access and dissemination of information and the civic consciousness of its members.⁷⁰

The **Jesuit Refugee Service** (JRS: <http://jrsportugal.pt>) is an international Catholic non-governmental organization, founded in 1980 by the Society of Jesus. The mission of JRS is to accompany, serve and advocate the cause of refugees and forcibly displaced persons worldwide.⁷¹ JSR is one of the main founding members of PAR, member of the Advisory Council for Migration (*Conselho Consultivo para os Assuntos da Imigração*, COCAI), the Municipality Forum of Intercultural Affairs and the Municipality Council of Intercultural Affairs and Citizenship.

The **Portuguese Association for Victim Support** (APAV: <http://www.apav.pt>) is a private charitable organisation, recognised by law with statutory objective to inform, protect and support citizens who have been victims of crime. It is a non-profit organisation assisted by volunteers, which supports victims of crime, in a personal, sensitive and professional way, through the provision of free and confidential services. Founded on 25 June 1990, it has offices nationwide, with headquarters in Lisbon.⁷²

The **Portuguese Red Cross** (<http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/where-we-work/europe/portuguese-red-cross/>) is a non-governmental charity of voluntary and public interest, non-profit, which develops its activity in respect for international humanitarian law and in compliance with the Core Principles and recommendations of the International Red Cross Movement and Crescent Red.

It is the mission of the Portuguese Red Cross to provide humanitarian and social assistance - especially the most vulnerable - by preventing and repairing suffering and contributing to the protection of life, health and human dignity.⁷³

⁷⁰ See: <https://www.facebook.com/Associa%C3%A7%C3%A3o-de-Refugiados-em-Portugal-303682035420/> (2016-10-03)

⁷¹ See: <http://jrsportugal.pt/conteudo.php?AHIBYFMz=AFMBVFMURIRXwMCUUpGvNKVgQGxg9RBkstela9Xr1&AHIBYFM9=ADEBN1Nm&AG4BaFM6UTNRdQMw=AHcBagtela9Xr1tela9Xr1> (2016-10-03)

⁷² See: http://www.apav.pt/apav_v3/index.php/en/apav/who-we-are (2016-10-03)

⁷³ See: <http://www.cruzvermelha.pt/> (2016-10-03)

The **Portuguese Council for Refugees** (*Conselho Português para os Refugiados* – CPR: <http://www.refugiados.net/novosite/index58.html>) is an NGO located in the Greater Lisbon Area, that is the only place where refugees and asylum seekers can get accommodation. The CPR offers a unique set of services directed at the specific needs of refugees and asylum seekers (information, guidance, adapted language courses, legal support, etc.).

The CPR has an Office for Professional Insertion (*Gabinete de Inserção Profissional – GIP*) that is cooperating with public and private entities, like the national PES (IEFP – *Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional* – Institute for Employment and Vocational Training) has created a nationwide network of several hundred GIPs as local contact points with the population, 10 of them with a specific offer for immigrants and one (the GIP-CPR) with a specific offer for refugees (DG EMPL 2016c, 2).

Union of Misericórdias Portuguesas, just like the above mentioned institutions, provides help with housing and asylum seekers ‘subsidy (asylum seekers are entitled to a monthly subsidy), language courses and assessments for further integration to daily life.

3 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

The very small (but increasing) numbers of refugees in Portugal mean that the entry of refugees and asylum seekers into the country and their integration is not a major issue within Portuguese public debate and therefore the pressure on political decision makers and on the public administration to respond in a timely and adequate manner to the challenges of integration is reduced (DG EMPL 2016c, 1f.).

In principle, asylum seekers, refugees and other third-country migrants have access to the same active labour market measures as nationals, but at the same time there is no special focus on their situation and the difficulties they might face while trying to enter the labour force. Until recently only language courses were the standard offer for refugees and asylum seekers, now at least they are automatically registered as candidates for a job or training offer (ibid. 3).

3.1 Support programmes for students

The **Global Platform for Syrian Students**⁷⁴ was initiated in 2013 by Portugal’s former Prime Minister Jorge Sampaio, to offer emergency scholarships and grants to Syrian students to access higher education. It is an innovative 3-pillar organisation based on a [Network of Partners](#), an [Academic Consortium](#), and a [Special Emergency Fund](#). It brings together various stakeholders into a collaborative model (governments, international and regional organisations, donor agencies, universities, foundations, NGOs of different cultural backgrounds and faith-based organizations, the private sector and individuals), while its central office functions at no cost since it’s embedded into the former prime minister’s institutional office.

⁷⁴ See: <http://www.globalplatformforsyrianstudents.org> (2016-11-14)

The Platform's core group of institutional partners include the [Council of Europe](#), the [League of Arab States](#), the [International Organization of Migrations \(IOM\)](#) and the [Institute of International Education \(IIE\)](#).

Both individuals and institutions can take part in the Platform's work by:

- becoming a host family;
- becoming a member of the national or regional committee and provide field support;
- becoming a volunteer for the team in charge of coordination, reporting and monitoring;
- becoming a partner by endorsing or offer support through assistance /donation⁷⁵

The programme entered into its operational phase in March 2014, supported by the Portuguese Government. It allowed 45 Syrian students selected out of 1,700 candidates to resume their university studies under an emergency scholarship programme, providing a comprehensive integrated "higher education care" services package. Although proving to be a very effective and low-cost model, a lack of funding has left another 700 Syrian students without scholarships they need to continue their studies in spite of having secured their admission at university with tuition fee waivers.

Some additional 50 Syrian students have joined this programme for the 2014-2015 Academic Year and 40 Syrian Students will very soon start the Academic Year 2015 - 2016 in Portugal.⁷⁶

The Portuguese Government together, with the institutions of higher education, promotes the **Alcantara Programme**, an initiative being joined by several public and private entities. The programme gathers students, researchers, teachers, workers belonging to institutions from universities and polytechnic institutes to facilitate the reception process of refugees, to provide useful information, to support the process of learning and practicing the Portuguese language, to integrate into daily life and connect with locals, to engage the young ones in activities aiming to discover the scientific and cultural Portugal, as well as to foster the establishment of solidarity networks between communities.⁷⁷

3.2 Other support measures

The Refugee Support Platform (PAR) works with a flexible rescue strategy. Instead of creating large refugee centres for housing and education, it fosters placement all over the whole country. The cooperating institutions receive and host just one or few families. The advantage of this model is that refugee families receive a much more personalized assistance and support.

Finding the right 'matching' is important element of the system. This refers to the optimisation of collaboration between institutions (areas) and experts; as well to the best possible placement of refugees at the right institutions.

The receiving institutions major concerns are:

- Providing housing
- Cultural integration - Portuguese lessons
- Assistance to young people who want to continue their studies

⁷⁵ See: <http://www.globalplatformforsyrianstudents.org/index.php/get-involved> (2016-11-14)

⁷⁶ See: <http://www.globalplatformforsyrianstudents.org/index.php/achievements> (2016-11-14)

⁷⁷ See: <http://www.programalcantara.pt> (2016-11-14)

- Simplify and fasten the skill recognition
- Help to access the job market

Since PAR works in a flexible, cooperative way involving numerous institutions, the assessment of skills and competences is organised individually by host institutions.⁷⁸

Associação Home Without Borders is a bottom up flat-share initiative to offer housing by private persons to refugees. The model focuses on organic integration, fostering informal education and social responsibility.

It is in some ways similar to the business model of Couchsurfing and Airbnb. Potential hosts can register into a database to offer a room or flat to share, on volunteer bases. Both host and refugee undergo an assessment process, carried out by intermediaries, after which the best host-refugee match is chosen.

In the next step the refugee meets his/her potential host and they get to know each other better. Finally, if they decide on moving forward with the process the refugee moves in. The rent is financed throughout the Association's fundraising tool, crowdfunding, sponsorship or other individual donation system.

The idea originally comes from Germany (Refugees Welcome) and spread in Europe as a social startup project. The Portuguese organization has its own national site and support system.⁷⁹

The Jesuit Refugee Service launched **Capacitação4Job Project** to provide training and capacity enhancement for refugees and young migrants in extremely vulnerable situation (between the age of 18-30). The program focuses on enabling young people to enter the job market, by carrying out the assessment and enhancement of the most relevant skills and competences, such as soft skills, non-routine skills, professional, social, personal, relational (interactional) skills. They provide traineeship and volunteering possibility. In the realization of this project JRS cooperates with the Grupo Jerónimo Martins, Agrupamento de Escolas Pintor Almada Negreiros and JLM communication agency. The project is financed by EEA Grants (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein), through the Active Citizenship Program. In Portugal the program is managed by Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Information received from Mariana Barbosa, Faculty of Education and Psychology at Catholic University of Porto, member of Executive Commission, PAR.

⁷⁹ See: <http://refugees-welcome.pt/> (2016-11-14)

⁸⁰ See: <http://jrspportugal.pt> (2016-11-14)

Country fiche: Spain

1. General information on refugee situation

1.1 Developments since 2015

Spain has one of the lowest rates inside the EU in number of applications of asylum and in recognition of international protection. However, Middle Eastern crisis (and mainly the war in Syria) have increased the number of applications of asylum in Spain (91.25 % more than in 2012).

In this fiche the number of applicants of asylum in Spain are presented and compared with the previous years. It is very important to take into account that this information is about applications and not about the resolutions of these applications (this point makes the difference between an asylum seeker and a refugee). These data are very difficult to find, as Spain indicates the number of applications solved each year, but the year of presentation of the application remains unclear.

During 2015, according to Eurostat, 14,780 people applied for international protection in Spain and, according to the provisional data of the OHR, were 14,881 – predominately men: 8,934 –, representing an increase of over 150 % compared to 2014.

Only between 1992 and 1994, during the Balkan wars, there were more than 11,000 applicants a year, with 1993 as the top with 12,615 so far. The remarkable increase of applications from Syria (5,724 applicants against 1,679 of 2014) and Ukraine (3,420 vs. 946) largely explains this fact, which, however, only represents 1 % of those who entered overall into the 28 countries of the European Union.⁸¹

5,785 people out of the almost 15,000 who applied for asylum were women (5,724 Syrians – 2,275 women). However, this increase has not had an appropriate response from the authorities. The staff in the Offices of Asylum and Refuge (OAR), and especially the staff in charge of studying the applications of asylum did not receive additional reinforcements until the end of 2015. This fact produced huge delays, not only during the first interviews, but also with regard to the final resolution of the applications.

On this regard, it should be mentioned that asylum authorities do not study several requests of international protection because they prefer to wait for the improvement of the human rights situation in the countries of origin of the applicants, under the denominated '*criterion of prudence*'. This is the reason why people from Mali, Ukraine or Palestine (among others) can see their application paralysed⁸².

This modus operandi has been criticized by associations working to defend the rights of refugees.

1.2 Data on refugees

⁸¹ See: <https://www.cear.es/category/noticias/> (2016-10-04)

⁸² Comisión Española de Ayuda al refugiado (CEAR), 2016. *Informe 2016: Las personas refugiadas en España y Europa* [online]. See: <http://www.cear.es/wp-content/>

Syria is the country with the highest number of applications of asylum (5,724 applicants). Most of the international applications of protection of people from **Syria** were formalised in Beni Enzar border checkpoint (Melilla, Spain) where an asylum office was inaugurated in March 2015.

The most common profile of the applicant is a large family group with minors. In previous years the most common profile were men.

Ukraine is the second country with the highest number of asylum seekers (3,420). The reason of this increase is the escalation of the conflict, despite of its low impact on the media.

The instruction of these applications was paralysed because of the application of the '*criterion of prudence*' which means that the Office of Asylum and Refuge (OAR) does not decide on the resolution about the protection and prefers watching the development of the situation in the country of origin.

During the last year, 2015, the profile of applicants were families, but the number of young men increased, probably because of the forced military recruitment for men up to 27 years old.

Palestine was the third in number of applicants (809 in 2015; 209 in 2014). This increase is due to the high percentage of Palestine people coming from Syria, where they were already living in exile before the conflict. Now they go through a second exile and their situation of vulnerability is increasing. Besides, the process of instruction of their cases is slower since Syrian applications have increased.

The fourth place is for **Argelia** (675 applicants in 2015; 309 in 2014). 426 applications were presented in the Autonomous city of Ceuta (which represents 63.1 % of the total) and not in the asylum office, but within the city.

The most common profile is young men without family.

Venezuela is the fifth country with the highest number of applicants (596 in 2015; 124 in 2014; 35 in 2013). The number of applications has escalated quickly in the last 2 years. In this case, the OAR applies the '*criterion of prudence*' too.

In sixth place is **Morocco** (409 in 2015; 98 in 2014). It is remarkable the increase of applications arguing prosecution motivated by sexual orientation presented in the Autonomous City of Melilla, and the increase of mixed marriages with people from Syria. And this is clearly one of the more affected aspects of the asylum law: the family reunification.

In seventh place we find **Dominican Republic** (279 applicants in 2015) and **China** in eighth place (248 in 2015; 12 in 2014).

The profile of the Chinese refugee is a young man travelling alone who arrives to Madrid's airport with a tourist visa. They mainly argue religious prosecution. Once more, the OAR uses the '*criterion of prudence*' and their cases keep paralysed for years.

Mali went down to ninth place (from 620 applicants in 2014 to 225 in 2015) not due to the improvement of the conflict, but because of the high number of denials in the previous year. Mali was followed by **Nigeria** (217), **Somalia** (160), **Cameroon** (153) and **Honduras** (148).

Altogether 45 % of the asylum seekers are men and 55 % are women and children⁸³.

⁸³ Comisión Española de Ayuda al refugiado (CEAR), 2016. *Informe 2016: Las personas refugiadas en España y Europa* [online]. See: <http://www.cear.es/wp-content/>

For the first time Madrid was no longer the city with the highest number of applications received. Since 2015, 6,368 people asked for asylum in the Autonomous City of Melilla, (42.8 % of the total).

Most of these people were Syrian citizens who asked for asylum at the border post of Beni Enzar. This also meant that, for the first time, the number of applications submitted in Spanish territory was very similar to the border post, opposite to the traditional bigger weight of the first case.

Table 2
Number of applications of asylum in Spain (per year)

YEAR	APPLICATIONS
2011	3,422
2012	2,588
2013	4,502
2014	5,947
2015	14,881

Source: Ministerio del Interior (<http://www.interior.gob.es/web/servicios-al-ciudadano/extranjeria/asilo-y-refugio> (2016-10-04))

Despite this recent substantial increase in the absolute number of first-time asylum applications, Spain's relative weight with respect to the EU-28 total remains marginal.

2. Important actors

National

Interior Ministry typically responsible for policing, emergency management, national security, supervision of local governments, conduct of elections, public administration and immigration matters: <http://www.interior.gob.es/web/servicios-al-ciudadano/extranjeria/asilo-y-refugio>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (*Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación*) is the department of Government of Spain responsible for Spain's foreign relations: <http://www.exteriores.gob.es/Portal/es/Paginas/inicio.aspx>

Ministry of Employment and Social Security was created by the Royal Decree of May 8, 1920 and manages the policies of the Government related to Labour relations, employment immigration and emigration, as well as the organization of the Social Security in Spain: <http://extranjeros.empleo.gob.es/es/ProteccionAsilo/index.html>

State Bodies and Security Forces (*Guardia Civil y Cuerpo Nacional de Policía*) are a set of professional security forces and permanent character at the service of the government to maintain public safety.

The **Customs Surveillance Service** (*Servicio de Vigilancia Aduanera, SVA*) is a Spanish law enforcement agency responsible for the investigation and prosecution of cases involving contraband, illegal drugs, financial evasion and violations, money laundering, surveillance for financial police purposes and the provision of judicial police services.

International

ACNUR (UNHCR in Spain): <http://www.acnur.es/>

FRONTEX: <http://frontex.europa.eu/>

NGOs

The Catholic Migration Commission Association (ACCEM): <http://www.accem.es/es>
CEAR (*Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado*; Spanish Refugee Aid Commission):

<http://www.cear.es>

Cruz Roja (Red Cross): http://www.cruzroja.es/cre_web/principalci/ayuda-crisis-refugiados.html

Médicos Sin Fronteras: <https://www.msf.es/>

La Merced Migraciones (LMM): <http://www.lamercedmigraciones.org>

Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS): <https://www.moas.eu/>

Rescate: <https://www.ongrescate.org/>

Save the Children: <https://www.savethechildren.es/actualidad/especial-ninos-refugiados>

SOS RACISMO: <http://www.sosracismomadrid.es/web/blog/category/refugiados/>

Citizen initiatives

International movement Refugees Welcome: <http://refugiados-bienvenidos.es/>

3 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

According to a recent study by the Bertelsmann Stiftung (2016b) the typical qualification of asylum seekers in Spain is unknown as information has not been systematically collected (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 108).

Labour-market integration measures for refugees are implemented nationally by some of the above mentioned NGOs and by four refugee registration centres. The NGOs design programmes and submit them to public calls in order to receive funding. The measures are coordinated by the Department of Immigrant Integration, within the Ministry of Employment and Social Security (MEYSS), and co-financed by the European Commission.

The programmes usually start with the *integration stage* (phase 2), and build on the competences beneficiaries acquire during the six-month *reception period* (phase 1). The latter are basically tending to deliver preliminary competences that aim at preparing beneficiaries for employment by dealing with pre labour-market related aspects such as language courses, adjustment of expectations and educational profiling, pre-employment training, labour-market orientation and literacy (ibid. 113).

3.1 National system for evaluating and recognising non-formally and informally acquired skills and competences

In Spain a well established procedure for evaluation and recognising non-formally and informally acquired skills and competences is in place. Unfortunately, these mechanisms are not yet used for refugees and asylum seekers as the skill certificate is mentioned in the 2009 asylum act but the specific regulation how it will work for this specific target group is still pending (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016b, 114).

The application form for international protection provided by the Interior Ministry collects information about the applicant's studies, but it does not include questions related to skills acquired during non-formal or informal processes.

3.2 Support services

Besides initiatives by the central Government, a good practice measure with regard to the integration has been adopted by the cities of Barcelona and Madrid, which have started an initiative consisting of a register of families offering to host refugees and to provide them other assistance, including legal advice, social work, counselling or translation services.

Madrid City Council created the website www.refugiadosmadrid.com with the aim of helping people to obtain more information about the campaign for helping refugees, and to show them how to collaborate with other associations for helping in hosting and integrating refugees in Spain.

Although Spanish city councils have no competence on asylum, Barcelona City Council created the Immigrant, Emigrants & Refugees Attention Service (SAIER) which works with other local entities, provides help and information to the refugees and covers the deficiencies of the national host programme by attending the basic needs of the most vulnerable people.

Besides, the City Council started the programme "Barcelona, refuge city" with the aim of getting the city ready to assist refugees.

Country fiche: Turkey

1 General information on refugee situation

For migrants, Turkey has been a country of origin, transit and destination and a bridge between Europe and Asia for a long time. Millions of refugees who aim to escape from war, poverty or disasters in their country of origin find asylum in Turkey. In the circumstances, Turkey has begun to host one of the largest migrant and refugee populations in the world. By 2015, more than 2.5 millions refugees – especially Syrians, Iraqis, Afghans, Iranians and Somali – have applied for the right of temporary protection or asylum within Turkey's borders.⁸⁴

In Turkey, there are three types of refugee: The term “*refugee*” signifies legally only refugees from European countries of origin because Turkey maintains a geographical limitation to the 1951 Refugee Convention; i.e. Turkish or Muslim minorities from the Balkans can be refugees, but not persons from Syria or Iraq. In addition, the concept of an asylum seeker does not exist in the Turkish judicial system. By definition, therefore, it is not possible to seek asylum in Turkey. Syrians fleeing the war are by international definitions refugees, but legally they are not refugees in Turkey (DG EMPL 2016d, 2).

However, Turkey adopted a new law, titled “Law on Foreigners and International Protection” (LFIP) in April 2013, in parallel with a mass-influx of refugees from neighbouring Syria. Based on this law, Turkey ensures international protection to all persons in need, regardless of their country of origin. Besides this, the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) was created by this law. Thus, a new status and term, “*conditional refugee*” was created. But still, Turkey does not recognise people as refugees unless they arrive from the European continent. Syrians, therefore, are “conditional refugees” who are temporarily allowed to stay in Turkey until they find a third country that will accept them. Therefore, technically, 2.75 million Syrians should go either back to Syria or move on to a third country (ibid.).

Refugees from Syria (Syrian nationals and stateless Palestinians originating from Syria) are affected by a temporary protection regime, which is based on Article 91 of the LFIP and the Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR) of 22 October 2014. This status gives these people the right to legally stay in Turkey, and access to the basic rights and services. The status is implemented for all Syrians, without receiving their individual applications. Besides, asylum seekers from other non-European countries of origin can apply for an “individual international protection status”.

In addition to this, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) takes responsibility for determining the refugee status in Turkey and realising resettlement referrals of these refugees. If a non-Syrian is recognized as a refugee under UNHCR's mandate, they can be resettled as an individual or with their family to a third country. But this a long process and during this period, refugees do not have access to services and do not have the right to work.

Turkey is seen as a “bridge” country for thousands of refugees for illegal transit. The borders witness both regular and irregular migration towards the European Union. In this circumstances, the EU and Turkey signed a Readmission Agreement on 16th December 2013 and this agreement came into force on the 1st October 2014. The agreement regulates the readmission of nationals of the two signatories and stateless persons or nationals of third

⁸⁴ See: <http://www.iom.int/countries/turkey> (2016-10-05)

countries with which Turkey signed bilateral treaties or arrangements on readmission.⁸⁵ This agreement was expected to better manage the irregular migration flows arriving to the EU from Turkey.

As the readmission agreement did not show the intended results of better managing the illegal flows of migration, in March 2016, EU Heads of State or Government and Turkey agreed to end the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU and replace it instead with legal channels of resettlement of refugees to the European Union. The aim is to replace disorganised, chaotic, irregular and dangerous migratory flows by organised, safe and legal pathways to Europe for those entitled to international protection in line with EU and international law.⁸⁶ The implementation of the agreement, especially the resettlement of refugees, is not working very well at the moment (only very few refugees were resettled so far), therefore it is questionable how long the agreement might persist.

1.1 Developments since 2015

Turkey hosts millions of refugees and especially since 2015, the number of people who find asylum in Turkey has grown extensively. By the reason of conflicts in neighbouring Iraq and Syria, most of these asylum seekers are from these countries. Beside the Turkish government, non-governmental organisations take an important role in the fulfilment of refugees' needs.

1.2 Data on refugees

Temporary protection (only Syrians are beneficiaries) numbers in 2015: 2,503,409 (compared to 1,519,286 in 2014 and 224,655 in 2013). Temporary protection grants beneficiaries the right to legally stay as well as some level of access to basic rights and services. Until July 2016, the number still increased to 2,730,485 persons, a vast majority of them (2,474,790) lives outside the camps and are spread across the Turkish border provinces while nearly 255,695 live in 26 camps close to the border with Syria.⁸⁷

According to the Turkey Migration Report for 2015, international protection applications in 2015 have risen to 64,232 (31,112 in 2014 and 30,311 in 2013). These applications mostly come from people from Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran.⁸⁸

The biggest group of refugees in Turkey are therefore Syrians (2.7 million in July 2016), followed by Iraqis (123,584), Afghanis (109,012) and Iranians (26,947).⁸⁹

2 Labour market situation

Integrating refugees or persons under international protection applications into the labour market is not a priority for the Turkish government – also due to the large numbers of refugees in the country. In February 2016 a decree came into effect that covers all Syrian

⁸⁵ See: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-285_en.htm (2016-10-06)

⁸⁶ See: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-1221_en.htm (2016-10-05)

⁸⁷ See: http://www.turkey.iom.int/sitrep_eng.pdf (2016-10-05)

⁸⁸ See: http://www.goc.gov.tr/files/files/2015_g%C3%B6%C3%A7_y%C4%B1ll%C4%B1k_rapor_18_04_16.pdf (2016-10-23)

⁸⁹ See: http://www.turkey.iom.int/sitrep_eng.pdf (2016-10-05)

refugees and enables them to receive work permits. Therefore, Syrians are provided with temporary identification cards and within six months they are eligible for a work permit. There are geographical restrictions, as Syrians can only work in the area where their IDs have been issued. An enterprise can only compose up to 10 % of its workforce with Syrians, but if a position is still open after four weeks, this restriction does no longer apply. For agricultural work or animal husbandry additional regional permits are required. Still, the number of these work permits is very low – in May 2015 only approx. 3,800 have been issued; top sectors were construction, textiles, and manufacturing. The work permits are valid for one year and renewable (DG EMPL 2016d, 3).

Besides this, Syrians also set up their own enterprises (approx. 2,500 by the end of 2015), but most of these enterprises are completely off the official grid.

3 Important actors

Government organisations

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management (*Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü*): http://www.goc.gov.tr/main/Tr_1

Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD): <https://www.afad.gov.tr/>

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Education Directorate General of Lifelong Learning (*Hayat Noyu öğrenme Genel Müdürlüğü*): <http://hbogm.meb.gov.tr/>

Local authorities (such as governorships, municipalities)

NGOs

The Turkish Red Crescent (*Türk Kızılayı*): <https://www.kizilay.org.tr/>

Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (*Sığınmacılar ve Göçmenlerle Dayanışma Derneği*): <http://site.sgdd.info/>

International Blue Crescent (*Uluslararası Mavi Hilal İnsani Yardım ve Kalkınma Vakfı*): <https://ibc.org.tr/sayfa.php?p=iletisim>

Validation

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management (*Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü*): http://www.goc.gov.tr/main/Tr_1

International Labour Organisation General Directorate (*Uluslararası İşgücü Genel Müdürlüğü*): <http://www.calismaizni.gov.tr/>

4 Good practice measures and policies for recording and evaluating refugees' competences

There are almost no programmes that are recording or evaluating refugees' competences. As there are so many refugees in the country, other aspects, such as basic rights, housing, and sanitation are more prevalent. Anyway, countrywide there are some ever-developing policies and programmes that enhance migrants' conditions, such as temporary identification cards, Lifelong Learning Programme, etc.

In terms of policies for recording refugees, DGMM collects biometric data, including fingerprints, during registration and maintains electronic files for each beneficiary in the

agency's new electronic file management system named "Göç-Net".⁹⁰ Therefore, migrants get possession of temporary identification cards and become entitled to have access to services, i.e. from education to employment.

There is also a *Communication Centre for Foreigners*⁹¹, where refugees may be informed about all manner of their problems or rights.

4.1 Support services

However, with regard to education, the Lifelong Learning Programme arranged by the Ministry of Education was named by the Turkish partner as a possible good practice example: It aims at providing Syrians' with education and provisional education/training centres that are opened where Syrian refugees should be able to continue their basic education in Arabic but may also join courses for vocational education.

In the beginning, Turkey was following the policy that Syrian refugees would return to their country in a short span of time, so regulations about their education and employment did not exist. But as the situation in Syria got worse in time and the number of Syrian refugees has increased year by year, some regulations have been developed.

Based on Notice posted by Turkey Ministry of Education in 24/04/2013, the establishment of places of education is regulated for the first time, and with Notice in 26/09/2013, the opening of Turkish and vocational education was decided. While only Arabic curriculum was supported before these regulations, now Turkish curriculum is supported too. Based on the Temporary Protection Regulation effectuated in October 2014 and Notice 2014/21, Syrian refugees who have temporary identification cards also attain the opportunity for education, sanitation and social aid. Thus, refugees may take Turkish language course as well as occupational skill training via non-formal learning at "*Temporary Education Centres (TECs)*", established under the Directorate General of Lifelong Learning (Turkish Ministry of Education).⁹² By the year of 2016, TECs are under control of the Turkish Ministry of Education, and the institution continues to give services to refugees in the field of Turkish courses and vocational training.

Besides this, the Turkish Ministry of Education indicates especially the recognition of the Lifelong Learning in the Lifelong Learning Action Plan and Strategy Paper for 2014-2018⁹³ and the integration of refugees into the education system in the Strategic Plan for 2015-2019⁹⁴. By these papers, formal, non-formal and informal education of refugees is regimented and also, prior learning assessment is possible.

⁹⁰ See: <http://www.goc.gov.tr/gecicikoruma/Pages/YabanciKimlikSorgulama.aspx> (2016-10-23)

⁹¹ See: http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/yabancilar-iletisim-merkezi_350_361_8905_icerik (2016-10-23)

⁹² See: http://file.setav.org/Files/Pdf/20160309195808_turkiyedeki-suriyeli-cocuklarin-egitimi-pdf.pdf (2016-10-23)

⁹³ See: <http://hbogm.meb.gov.tr/www/2014-2018-hayat-boyu-ogrenme-stratejisi-belgesi-ve-eylem-plani-yayinlandi/icerik/302> (2016-10-23)

⁹⁴ See: <http://sgb.meb.gov.tr/www/mill-egitim-bakanligi-2015-2019-stratejik-plani-yayinlanmistir/icerik/181> (2016-10-23)

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