

UNHCR Europe NGO Consultation 2017 Regional Workshops – Central Europe

Promoting the Inclusion of Beneficiaries of International Protection across Europe

Title of the session

Approaches to Labour Integration of Refugees in Europe and Central Europe

Date: 16 October 2017

Time: 11:30-13:00 and 14:00-15:30

Countries (as per UNHCR organisational structure)

Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

Focal points / Moderators

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Speakers / Panellists

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Background

The primary purpose of this workshop is to increase the awareness amongst NGOs and other stakeholders working with refugees on the importance of the right to work for refugees and to identify the practical impediments and ways to overcome them with existing good practices, in particular at the national and local level which have successfully helped to overcome such obstacles.

Mainstream providers such as job centres can find it difficult to meet the specific needs of refugees due to many factors (cultural considerations, lack of language knowledge, lack of required skills, lack of staff in job centres) and therefore civil society has taken over the role of helping refugees to find employment. During the session we shall be looking at sharing good practices and discussing different programmes in the regions as well as in other European countries where the governments and local authorities have a more concrete approach in helping refugees access employment. We should be inspired by these good practices and should also explore the role of NGOs in providing more information to employers and host society of the potential contribution refugees can make and of the legal and administrative requirements to hire them.

Access to employment is a key issue to refugee integration. In order for refugees to participate actively in the economic life of the asylum country, to avoid social isolation and to become financially self-sufficient, receiving states should recognise that an absence of employment opportunities creates a situation of dependence leading to higher expenditure for the host country. Ensuring that refugees acquire work and retain employment is a challenge in Central Europe. Some of the main obstacles identified include:

- § Limited recognition of skills and diplomas;
- § Unawareness of available recruitment, training or job placement services and programmes or their rights and entitlements in the work place;
- § Unfamiliarity with the way the job market operates;
- § Discrimination in the labour market;
- § No legal access to self-employment or limited capacities to access it due to a lack of knowledge on available services or the impossibility to get start-up loans;
- § Language difficulties;
- § State strategies to support the local job market rarely take into consideration the specific situation of refugees (provided of course they have the right to work).

Objectives / Guiding questions

Objectives

- v Define up to 5 good practices in how to achieve economic inclusion of refugees in society. In doing so, explore the role of NGOs, governments as well as the private sector in the employment of refugees and provide recommendations on raising awareness amongst governments and societies in general on the rights of refugees to employment.
- v Explore and define strategies to overcome obstacles faced by refugees when trying to access the employment market and by potential employers of refugees.

Guiding questions

1. Where in the EU is the best system / approach of recognition of skills and diplomas of refugees and how does it work?
2. What are the most successful requalification programs for refugees in Central Europe? How do they work?
3. What are the best innovative methods of recruitment by private and state actors?
4. What is the role of refugee/migrant communities in finding jobs for refugees in Europe and Central Europe?

Methodology

Combination of panel discussions (guest speakers) and breakout sessions in groups to define and come up with best practices and ways to overcome the above obstacles, followed by a report back session with conclusions.

Agenda

11:30-11:40 – Introduction

Opening remarks: [Olivera Vukotic](#), [Martin Rozumek](#)

11:40-12:30 – Good practices, innovative methods and experiences in the field of labour integration of refugees in Europe

Presentations by panellists: [Zsuzsanna Puskás](#), [Carolina Marin](#), [Ewa Ostaszewska-Żuk](#), [Lilla Prontvai](#)

12:30-13:00 – Q&A and input from the audience

Lunch

14:00-15:00 – Break out into the two working groups (WG)

WG1: Questions 1 and 2 – best practices and innovative methods in the recognition of qualifications and re-qualification

WG2: Questions 3 and 4 – best methods of recruitment and the role of refugee/migrant communities in finding jobs for refugees in Central Europe

15:00-15:30 – Reporting back