

What is the local impact of migration on jobs and working conditions? CEMR-EPSU joint report

Migration policies at local level

(26 February 2016) In 2015, Europe faced the biggest refugee crisis since the end of World War II. By the end of August 2015, 10 countries with the highest number of asylum seekers received more than 548.596 asylum applications compared to the 571.000 during 2014 at the European level. At the same time, Europe is in the process of deep demographic change with an aging population and it is predicted that by 2020 European counties will need 66 million migrants to sustain the contemporary level of economic development. Migration raised new challenges for local and regional authorities across Europe particularly related to the integration agenda, although they are not solely responsible for the implementation of the migration policies. Certain municipalities in the EU, have formulated their own integration policies as a reaction of the absence of integrational measures at the national level.

Local authority actions play an important part in the integration of third country nationals:

1. Measures in the areas of civic education including language courses and life-long learning - promoting intercultural models and social cohesion initiatives for different ages and levels.
2. Integration affirmative actions into local labour market and encouraging entrepreneurship.

Affirmative measures in labour market

At the local level, once migrants can earn their living and start to pay taxes, they are able to make a contribution to society and the economy. Unfortunately, there are barriers and challenges which local authorities will have to overcome. There is often a lack of a clear vision of what employment in local authorities and cities could contribute followed with a low level of staff awareness of the benefits of a diverse workforce. Labour market statistics show that unemployment rates among

third country nationals are higher than among the reporting country population. There is also a difference in the over-qualification rate of third-country nationals when divided into countries of origin with high and medium/ low development index. Third country citizens from countries with medium/low development index have even higher levels of over-qualification. In some EU counties there are examples of initiatives which have tried to bring together social partners and other key players to support migrants in securing local employment and training. This is exemplified in the city of Malmo in Sweden where authorities provided support for migrants who do not have documental evidence of their qualifications and skills in order to prepare them for the labour market.

The impact of Austerity measures

Austerity measures dramatically hit migration policy as either the funds for integration were cut or many third country nationals work in sectors that have been disproportionately affected by the recession.

Recommendations for local authorities

It is estimated that only 1.9% of non-nationals work in public administration and defence in the EU due to legal and procedural recruitment barriers. However, although the public sector employs relatively few third country nationals, there are growing labour shortages in parts of the public sector, particularly social and health care and therefore local authorities will have to develop a narrative that provides:

- # positive account of the benefits of migration for national labour markets combined with the importance of social inclusion particularly through the recognition of the important role that third country nationals can play in the local economy and society;
- # providing information and services in multiple languages;
- # creating public procurement policies that encourage third country national businesses and third country national friendly businesses;
- # putting equal recruitment policies in place and monitor them annually;
- # setting targets and collect data to monitor and evaluate programmes for third country nationals.

- Read the full joint EPSU-CEMR Report (PSIRU, Jane Lethbridge), February 2016 :

Migration and local authorities - impact on jobs and working conditions

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