



Implementation Strategy
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Content

- 1. Introduction 1
- 2. About COME IN 2
- 3. Employing Refugees: needs and barriers..... 4
- 4. The COME IN training 6
 - 4.1 The training modules 7
 - 4.2 The COME IN Learning Platform 11
 - 4.3 Competence assessment – LEVEL 5..... 16
 - 4.4 Copyright rules..... 19
- 5. Our implementation experiences..... 20
 - 5.1 Country specific implementation approaches 20
 - 5.1.1 Austria..... 20
 - 5.1.2 Belgium..... 24
 - 5.1.3 Bulgaria 29
 - 5.1.4 Germany 34
 - 5.1.5 Greece 37
 - 5.1.6 Italy 40
 - 5.2 Key outcomes..... 44
- 6. Recommendations for strategic implementation 45
 - 6.1 Practical recommendations for carrying out the training sessions 45
 - 6.2 Implementation of the COME IN approach - strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats 47
- 7. Closing words 49
- COME IN Partners 50

1. Introduction

Today's European labour markets face numerous challenges such as increasing numbers of vacant positions in some sectors, skill shortage, ageing workforces, or the lack of motivated apprentices. In these circumstances, refugees represent an important resource of human capital and enterprises need to learn how to exploit the wealth of talent that refugees bring to Europe.

Furthermore, refugees' involvement in the labour market has crucial importance for their better integration to the wide society and building their belonging and cohesion. However, many European employers are still hesitant to employ refugees and HR managers may lack specific competences and tools needed for successful interaction with refugees.

In the framework of **COME IN - Competences in Enterprises on Integration**, a European project funded by the ERASMUS+ Programme, a comprehensive training for enterprises and organisations that want to employ and integrate refugees at their workplaces was created and applied.

The Implementation strategy at hand is one of the main products of the COME IN project. It introduces the training pack and online platform and highlights the benefits of the approach and the ways it can be applied.

Our **Implementation Strategy** addresses two target groups:

- Educators and training providers (VET trainers, HR-trainers) who provide learning opportunities for employers in the public, private as well as the non-profit sector. With the COME IN Implementation Strategy trainers get the chance to develop new professional competences and skills or expand the existing ones.
- Key staff in organisations that are (thinking about) employing refugees, such as HR-managers, supervisors or in-house trainers, who want to prepare themselves for the process of integrating refugees at the workplace.

The Implementation Strategy:

- Informs about the COME IN Training approach
- Allows access to a rich database of training materials
- Provides a detailed explanation of the online platform, which is available in six languages (English, Bulgarian, Dutch, German, French, Italian, Greek).
- Gives practical tips to trainers for carrying out the COME IN trainings

Purpose of the Implementation Strategy

The COME IN **Implementation Strategy** summarises the project experiences and recommended methodology in the practical implementation of the COME IN project. In this way we aim for a strategic transfer of our approach into other European regions. It is designed to enable education providers in VET, HR and in-

house trainers to implement an integration strategy in enterprises and set up and optimize their training approaches.

This document highlights the key results achieved during the implementation of the COME IN approach in the European partnering countries Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, and Italy. From the outset, a common focus has been to develop country-specific strategies on the implementation of the developed blended-learning approach. This is why the document is based on specific country reports from each member of the partnership and compares different approaches with regard to the implementation of the COME IN approach.

The Implementation Strategy draws conclusions and recommendations which are of interest for potential future users and relevant stakeholders, built upon the training and learning experiences and the feedback received during the piloting phase.

2. About COME IN

The main objective of COME IN was to support successful labour market inclusion of refugees and migrants through enhancing employers' competences and their willingness to hire and integrate them to the workplace. Therefore, a sustainable training and validation approach for companies and trainers was developed, dealing with the employment of refugees and migrants, based on transferable didactic concepts and methods.

Our target group

The main target group of COME IN consists of key staff in enterprises and organisations dealing with the employment and integration of refugees. On the other hand, VET and HR providers and people who work as trainers and educators play a crucial role in stimulating companies in hiring refugees.

The enterprises/organisations were provided with the necessary training instruments and guidelines to face the challenges of employing refugees/migrants, managing intercultural workplaces, and taking advantages of an effective management of diversity. This new approach generates benefits to the organisation in the area of workplace integration.

Our final beneficiaries

Given the large influx of refugees and immigrants in Europe during the past five years, COME IN had a strong focus on these vulnerable groups. We can distinguish two groups within the group of recent newcomers:

Migrants: while there is no formal legal definition of an international migrant, most experts agree that an international migrant is someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status. Generally, a distinction is made between short-term or temporary migration,

covering movements with a duration between three and 12 months, and long-term or permanent migration, referring to a change of country of residence for a duration of one year or more.

Refugees: Refugees are persons who are outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order and, as a result, require international protection. The refugee definition can be found in the 1951 Convention and regional refugee instruments, as well as UNHCR's Statute.¹

Our Vision

In the beginning of the project all partners developed a mission and vision for the COME IN project.

Our **mission** for COME IN is, to build local networks bringing organisations interested in employing refugees and regional stakeholders in economy and refugees' integration together. We aim at training and supporting them to hire and successfully integrate refugees at the workplace via offering comprehensive training materials and local network opportunities.

Our **vision** for COME IN is to change the minds of employers and our regional economy towards seeing refugees as a part of the solution instead of as a problem. We want to address the skill shortage of vulnerable companies via the employment of refugees and thereby also involve our regional economy in creating a more divers, open-minded and inclusive society.

Our approach

Based on our mission and vision statements, the COME IN training and support approach was developed, consisting of:

- face-to-face workshops with network opportunities,
- a growing online learning and networking platform with directly usable information and online learning materials,
- pilot learning projects at the workplaces and
- a validation system to assess and document the developed competences.

During the first project phase, we did realise that national and regional solutions on labour market integration of refugees may provide financial, legal and administrative structural support; however, they do rarely influence the situation on local and interpersonal level where real integration takes place. Thus, the activities we implemented targeted specifically the interaction between employers and refugees to make a significant difference on interpersonal level. COME IN answers exactly to the needs of employers, which have already hired and/or are willing to employ refugees. During the development and implementation of COME IN, our main goal

¹ United Nations (UN), Refugees and Migrants, <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/definitions>.

was always to enhance competences of key staff members to successfully interact with refugees. Therefore, in the beginning of the project, a transnational research was carried out to identify employers training needs and barriers of refugees' employment.

3. Employing Refugees: needs and barriers

The increased influx of migrants that have been arriving in Europe in the past years is occurring at a time when European labour markets face an increasing number of job positions, which cannot be filled by native job seekers. Moreover, there is a shortage of high-skilled workers/professionals in employment areas like IT, manufacturing and engineering, or the hospitality business.

The OECD forecasts that refugees will boost Europe's labour force by up to one million people by the end of 2020, i.e. a rise of 0,4% in just over a year.² This is strengthened by the fact that many of these newcomers are young compared to the rapidly greying European population (according to Eurostat, 82% of 729,000 asylum seekers registered between May and October 2015, were younger than 34 years).

On the other hand, refugees represent one of the most vulnerable groups of migrants on the European labour market. On average, it takes refugees up to 20 years to have a similar employment rate as the native-born. In the first 5 years after arrival, only one in four refugees is employed, the lowest of all migrant groups. After 10 years, their employment rate reaches 56% but it remains below the employment rate of native-born persons in most countries. Therefore to exploit the wealth of talent that refugees bring to Europe, employers have to be prepared for integrating refugees whose legal status has been officially clarified and who have official permission to work.³

In 2018, the COME IN partnership published a [Transnational Research Report](#) that identifies the training needs and barriers for employers to recruit and integrate refugees/migrants into the workplace by combining quantitative and qualitative research results in all 6 European partner countries. We present the main research results below.

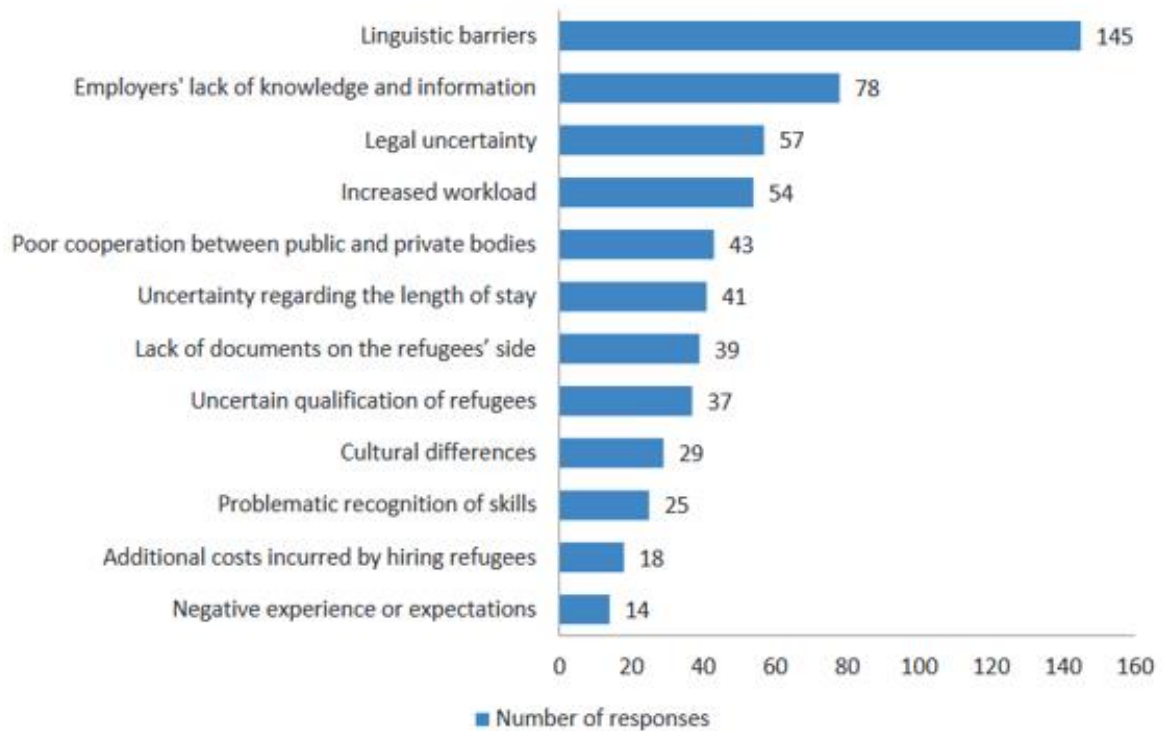
To get a full overview of the results of our research, please have a look at our [Transnational Research Report](#).

² OECD, International Migration Outlook 2019, 2019.

³ OECD, How are refugees faring on the labour market in Europe? A first evaluation based on the 2014 EU labour force survey ad hoc module, European Union, 2016.

Main barriers in employing refugees and migrants

Employing refugees includes some specific challenges and may be affected by actual as well as subjectively perceived barriers. The following figure presents the rating of barriers often linked to the refugees' employment.



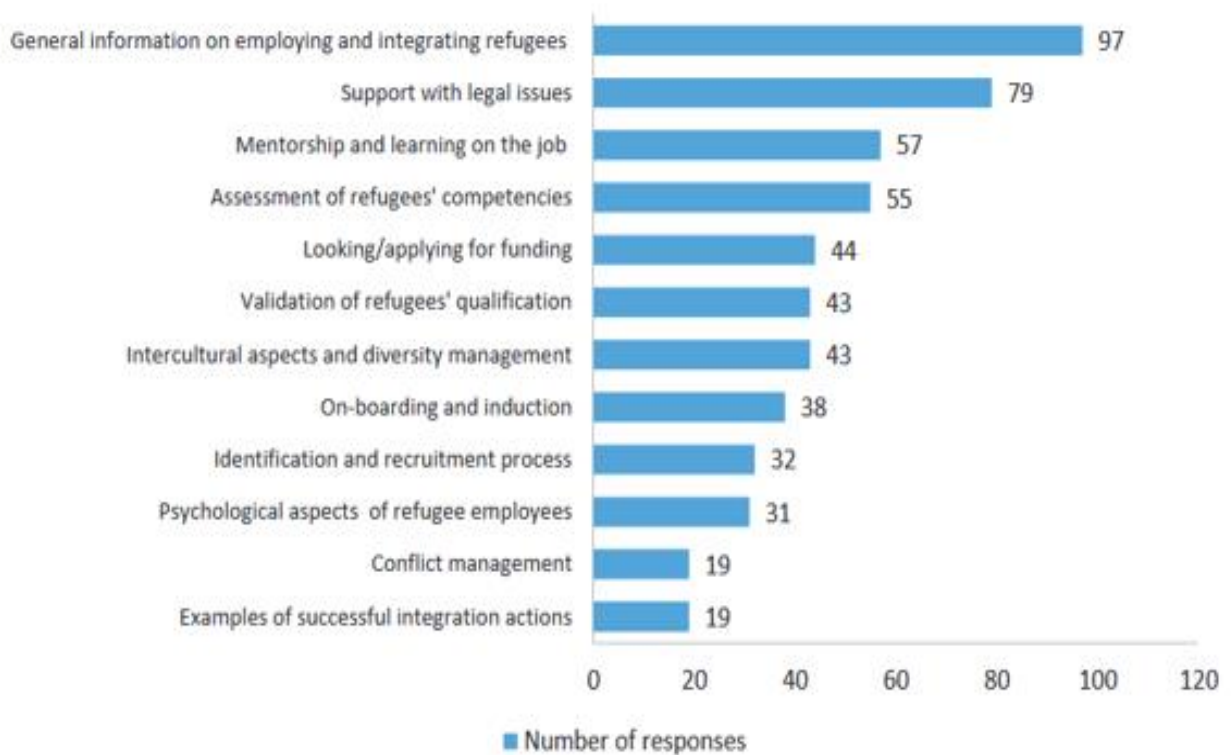
Our research confirms that European employers are still hesitant to hire refugees for diverse reasons: they may be not sure what a refugee's status means, nor which implications it may have on employment, they know little about the background of migrants, may have prejudices about other cultural values and lifestyles, do not feel competent to deal with possible psycho-social problems or even traumatisation, or simply have vague fears of a lot of unpredictable hassle involved in employing refugees and migrants.

Main needs of companies

When we look at the main support needs of employers, our research showed that employers have a strong need for general information on hiring and integrating refugees/migrants in the workplace and dealing with legal issues related to their employment.

From the interviews emerged that the core of the problem is not a shortage of information but rather confusion and inconsistency of information and official instructions. For example there is a considerable difference between small and large companies in this regard. While large companies which have solid HR services can deal with complicated procedures on their own, small companies need more guidance.

The rating of training and support needs is illustrated by the figure below.



According to the research results, employing refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants bring various benefits and advantages not only for employers and migrant employees but also to the entire work team as well as to the society and economy of the host country (and therefore the European society and economy too).

Even though some barriers, obstacles and challenges accompany refugees' and migrants' employment, once identified and acknowledged they can be overcome by well-tailored support and/or training.

4. The COME IN training

Based on the challenges and needs of our target group – described in the previous chapter - the COME IN project consortium has developed a comprehensive training. The COME IN offers include:

- training materials for face-to-face workshops,
- a growing online learning and networking platform with directly usable information and online learning materials,
- a validation system to assess and document the developed competences.

The training concept consists of five training modules addressing the most pressing/urgent problems of European companies and organisations interested in recruiting and integrating refugees into the workplaces. In this chapter we will introduce the three before mentioned parts of the training approach in detail and

provide some guidelines and recommendations for trainers and companies on how to use them.

4.1 The training modules

COME IN offers a comprehensive training for enterprises consisting of five modules including training materials for face-to-face workshops and online content covering the identified needs of companies when hiring people with a migrant background.

The following training modules were developed:

- Module 1: Refugees' Background
- Module 2: Competence Assessment
- Module 3: Learning on the job
- Module 4: Diversity Management
- Module 5: Easy Language

During the piloting phase of the COME IN training (See chapter 5: Our implementation Experiences) we identified recommendations for each module. These are presented below each module description.

All training materials are accessible on our [COME IN e-learning platform](#). You can find the guideline for using the online platform in the chapter 4.2 The COME IN Learning Platform.

Module 1: Refugees' Background

Employers' understanding of refugees' and migrants' legal and personal situation contributes to their willingness to hire people with migration background and facilitates their interaction at the workplace. The first COME IN module provides a general outlook of the legislation regulating refugees' employment and offers insights into the typical living arrangements of refugees and migrants in European countries. The exercises included in this module will give you the opportunity to put yourself in the position of people who had to leave their homes and now strive for better life in your country.

Module Objectives

To have a better understanding for refugees' and migrants' background: their reasons to come to Europe, their experiences and their living conditions in Europe

- To have an overview about the situations and reactions of the European Union and its member states
- To be able to distinguish between migrants, asylum seekers and refugees
- To know the legal frame under which those three groups are allowed to work

Unit Overview

- Unit 1 Reasons and Conditions for Migrating to Europe
- Unit 2 Current Situation of Refugees and Migrants in Europe

- Unit 3 Legal frame for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in Europe

Recommendations

This module is generally evaluated as the most useful in terms of hard data and practical information about legal aspects and administrative procedures. Therefore, this module can easily be used as a stand-alone-module. Based on the context of your country, it could be useful to add additional material about the possibilities of employment in your country and *Introduce participants to national, regional or local support structures that might be able to help learners to navigate administrative procedures. The information in this module needs to be regularly reviewed and updated.*

Module 2: Competence Assessment

When hiring refugees and migrants, their competences play a crucial role. Being able to recognise their knowledge, skills and potential becomes critical, especially when they can't prove their educational level and previous professional experience. In this module you will be introduced to the concept of competence assessment and provided with tools useful for the selection and strategic development of refugees' and migrants' abilities and competences in your organisation.

Module Objectives

- Introduce the competency model, its advantages and added value for the refugees' integration on the job;
- Sensitize on the importance of the competence assessment during refugees' integration process on the job;
- Introduce to competence assessment methods for every stage of the refugees' integration process on the job (the employee journey); Sensitize on the importance of employers' skills needed for the effective management of the competence assessment process;
- Sensitize of the benefits of assessing and validating competences by introducing the learners to competence-based methodology – LEVEL5.

Unit Overview

- Unit 1: Competency model
- Unit 2: From competence model to competence assessment
- Unit 3: Competence assessment during every stage of the employee journey
- Unit 4: Introduction to good practice in the assessment process – LEVEL5

Recommendations

Competence assessment is considered very useful since many migrants come to the hosting country without clear formal qualification and have many difficulties to get their academic titles and professional experience officially recognised. For the purpose of implementation, it could be useful to add material summarising the

process of education recognition and supplementing education in your country.

Regarding our proposed tool for Competence Assessment 'LEVEL5', it's important to invest some time in preparation since it documents an individual development process. It's also worth considering that:

- Assessment can be easily integrated in bilateral mentoring or coaching sessions.
- It's recommended not to hand out the complex reference systems to the learners, since this might cause problems in understanding. A short interview referring to the categories in the reference systems can be a good alternative in the assessment process.
- It's recommended to use this module in combination with the training-on-the-job module (Module 3). In this way, a company is not only assessing a refugee's/migrants' competence but also working on a strategic competence development plan afterwards.
- Avoid to merely present the state of the art competence assessment techniques. The training should involve working with tools and methods and trying them out.

Module 3: Learning on the job

Well-tailored on-the-job training can significantly help overcome the initial obstacles and get refugees and migrants promptly and smoothly into the job. COME IN offers training material dedicated to the key steps of on-the-job training development and implementation reflecting the specific needs of refugee and migrant employees and supporting the improvement of employer's training skills. The material explains different training methods useful in on-the-job training including mentoring and provides practical tips and recommendations for in-house trainers.

Unit Objectives

- To understand what on-the-job training means and why it is important in refugees' employment considering the side of trainer and learner.
- To be aware of advantages of OJT.
- To be aware of necessary resources and steps preceding OJT implementation.

Unit Overview

- Unit 1: On-the-job training
- Unit 2: Understanding how people learn
- Unit 3: Training skills
- Unit 4: Methods of on-the-job training
- Unit 5: On-the-job training planning phase
- Unit 6: On-the-job training project

Recommendations

In our experience 'mentorship' is generally considered as the most innovative and attractive on-the-job training method for employers. Here it's important to give the learners a short introduction in the existing training methods and offer practical insight by stimulating them to set up their own training project.

Development, planning and implementation of on-the-job training in small and medium enterprises may be quite demanding. To motivate and encourage employers, it is important to emphasize its importance and benefits for refugees' and migrants' job and workplace integration. If appropriate, mention the opportunities of work/internship contracts and programmes combining work and vocational training.

Module 4: Diversity Management

In today's modern international working world, the key to success lies in diversity. However, not all enterprises and organisations know how to manage diversity to get the best of it. This module will help you understand the benefits of culturally diverse workforce and guide you through the process of creating your own inclusive and productive workplace.

Module Objectives

- Understand own working culture and the impact of cultural diversity
- Develop intercultural competences
- Show how to create and manage diverse teams

Unit Overview

- Unit 1: Working Culture - Understanding the company's openness towards cultural diversity
- Unit 2: Intercultural competences
- Unit 3: Co-creation: "How to create something together"

Recommendations

This module is evaluated (by facilitators and participants) as the most interactive and entertaining. We advise to discuss cultural differences and intercultural communication interactively and to add interactive exercise to explore how the participants react to cultural differences.

A full day training gives more time for interactive group work (role-play, self-reflection rounds) that gives participants the chance to "experience" diversity instead of "learning about it".

Module 5: Easy Language

Effective communication is an essential aspect of successful cooperation in professional life. Refugees' and migrants' limited language skills may be a barrier to their integration in the team and work process. For that reason, employers need specific competence to communicate with employees with migrant background and support the development of their language skills. In this module you will learn how to use your mother tongue in a correctly simplified way, so that it is clear and easily understandable.

Module Objectives

- understand that spoken and written language can be adapted to people who have a low level of German language skills without making grammatical mistakes.
- know which vocabulary should be used and which should be avoided
- know how to use numbers and characters in a supportive way
- be able to create sentences which are easy to understand
- know how to support [understandability](#) with layout and pictures

Unit Overview

- Unit 1: Vocabulary
- Unit 2: Numbers and characters
- Unit 3: Sentences
- Unit 4: Texts
- Unit 5: Layout and pictures

Recommendations

During the course implementation is important to focus on explaining its importance and use. The guide to easy language is detailed and very self-explanatory and requires rather self-study effort.

However, the “Easy language approach” is only supposed to make the communication process with someone with little language skills easier – it does not substitute the need for a refugee to learn the national language.

4.2 The COME IN Learning Platform

The [COME IN Learning Platform](#) serves as an e-learning platform as well as an information repository and networking and community building tool for key staff from enterprises and organisations. It consists of a learning section providing the developed online material complementing the face-to-face workshops.

As the platform was developed by a project consortium consisting of partner organisations from different countries with different national languages, the platform is available in six language versions (English, German, Italian, Bulgarian, Greek and Dutch).

The online platform is free of charge and accessible for everyone who is interested in the COME IN training materials. How to register and enrol as user in the online platform will be explained at the end of this chapter.



Course material

The learning platform consists of the five modules that were previously presented. Their aim is to encourage and facilitate the recruitment and integration of refugees into European companies and organisations.

The online content allows for individual learning of participants to increase and deepen their knowledge and competences on topics of the workshops. The online content consists of learning units, additional reading material, exercises, case examples, etc.

However, it is also possible to use the material in order to train others, e.g. in workshops or in-house trainings. When implementing a training course it's recommended to offer the online platform as complementing tool to the face-to-face training sessions for very engaged participants who are interested in further materials and information.

The screenshot shows the 'Comeln Course EN' dashboard. At the top, there are navigation links for 'HOME', 'CALENDAR', and 'ENGLISH (EN)'. A sidebar on the left lists course components like 'Participants', 'Badges', and 'Grades'. The main content area features the 'Comeln LEARNING PLATFORM' logo and a 'Module Overview' section with icons for Module 1 (Refugees' background), Module 2 (Competence assessment), Module 3 (Learning on the job), Module 4 (Diversity management), Module 5 (Easy language), and a Forum (F). A callout bubble points to these icons, stating: 'Go to the different modules or the forum by clicking on the symbols in the centre.' Another callout points to the user profile section on the right, which shows the user's name 'Ma' and city 'ma', with the text: 'Your user profile.' A third callout points to the 'Competence Assessment' section, stating: 'The competence assessment tool for all modules.'

Community building

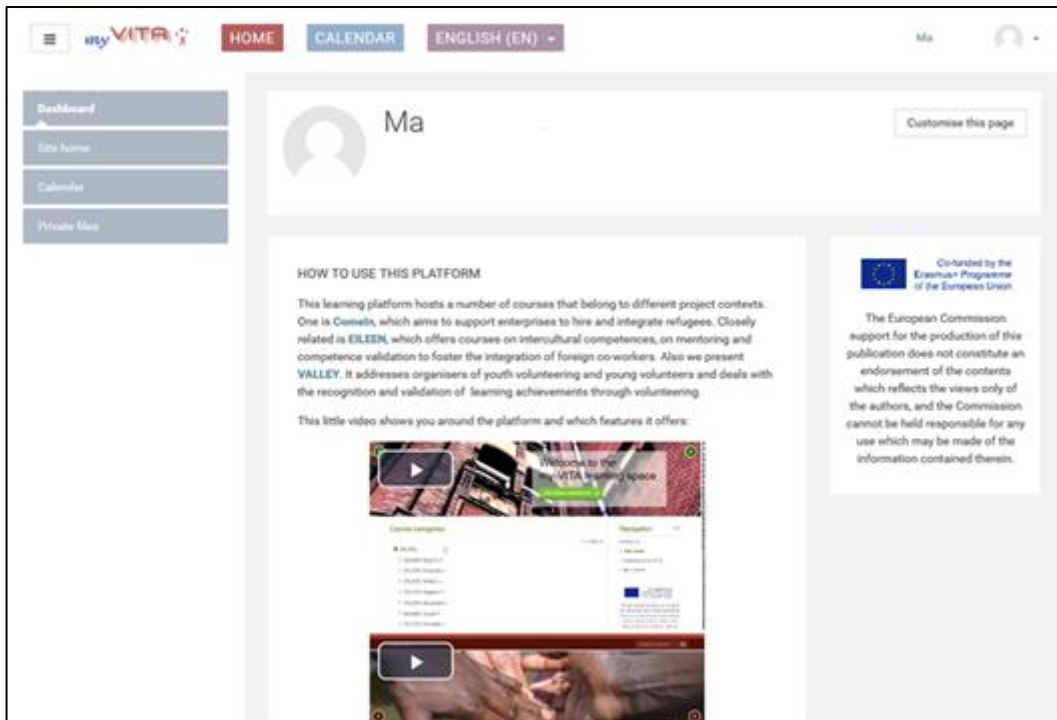
The platform also provides networking and community building tools, that allow for peer networking and synchronous and asynchronous support offers. To enable online communication between the users, forums were integrated. These forums are available in the respective language versions as national forums. Of course, users from Germany and Austria share a forum, as there should be no language barrier.

Registration guide

In this chapter, you learn how to register with the online platform, select the appropriate language version and use the platform as a tool for your personal further education.

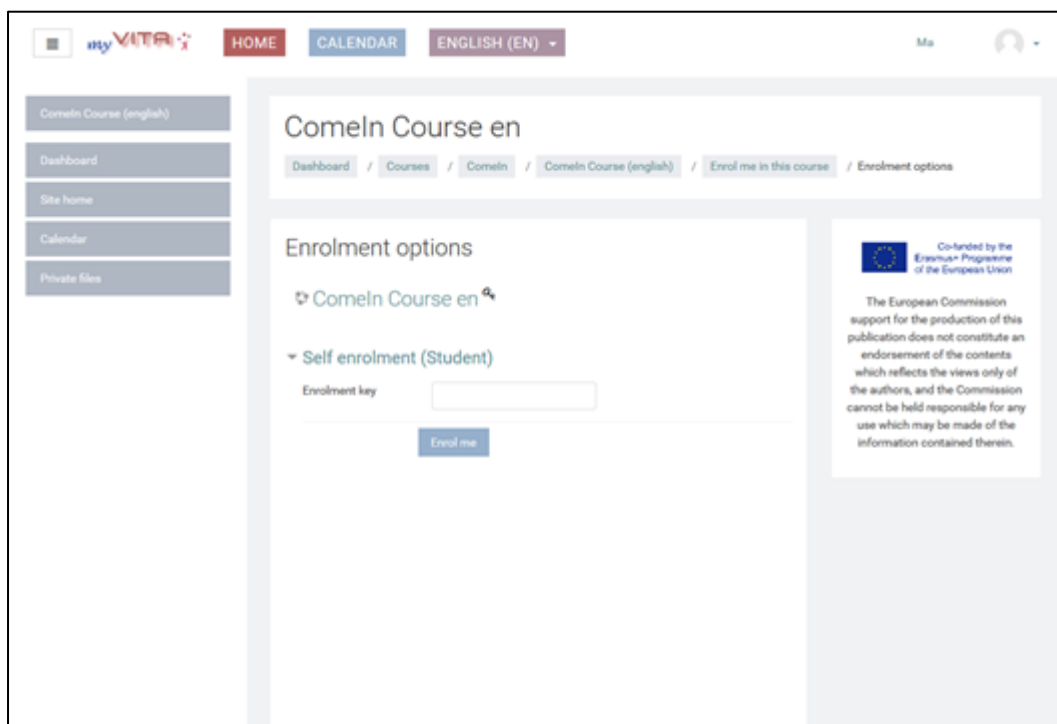
To register with the online platform, please follow the step-by-step instructions below.

1. Go to <http://learning.vita-eu.org/> and register yourself.
 - When you have been registered, please login. After being logged in, you can see your Dashboard:



- On the left hand you can see the menu. Click on the “site home” button, in order to see the list with available courses.
- Click on “Comeln” to see the available language versions of the COME IN course. Choose the language version you wish to enrol. The COME IN course is available in Bulgarian (BG), Dutch (NL), English (EN), German (DE/AT), Greek (EL) and Italian (IT).

2. This is the site for self-enrolment:



Please enter the enrolment key “come_in” (without quotation marks) and click on “Enrol me”. You are now enrolled and can browse the COME IN course in your chosen language.

In the column on the left side, you can see the different COME IN modules including the corresponding units and from there you can go directly to the desired module or unit.

Each module starts with a general overview, its objectives and its units. Furthermore, you can assess your own competences by clicking on “Competence Assessment” beneath the unit overview.

The screenshot displays the myVITA platform interface. On the left, a navigation menu lists various course elements: 'ComeIn Course (english)', 'Participants', 'Badges', 'Competencies', 'Grades', 'ComeIn LEARNING PLATFORM', 'Module 1: Refugees' background', '1.1. Reasons and Conditions for Migrating to Europe', '1.2. Current Situation of Refugees and Migrants in Europe', '1.3 Legal frame for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in Europe', 'Module 2: Refugees' competence assessment', '2.1. Competency model', and '2.2. From competence model to competence assessment'. The main content area shows the 'Module Overview' for 'Module 1: Refugees' background', which includes a detailed description, 'Module Objectives', and a 'Unit Overview' listing three units. A 'Competence Assessment Module 1' section is also visible at the bottom, indicating a self-rating questionnaire for integration aspects.

Return to your dashboard by clicking on „my-VITA“.

Module

In the left column you can directly choose the module and unit you wish to access.

Enter the competence assessment belonging to this specific module.

4.3 Competence assessment – LEVEL 5

Validation can be defined as 'the process of identifying, assessing and recognising skills and competences acquired in non-formal and informal settings'. Non-formal and informal learning and their validation aim at several demonstrable benefits – one is to promote motivation for development through recognition of learning. Validation can contribute to make learners more self-aware and critical and to engage in further learning. Another aim is to offer evidence of learning achievements gained outside the formal education system to be communicated to other stakeholders, e.g. to employers, and to promote the employability of persons with no or little formally recognised degrees.

Valuable competences, frequently developed through informal and non-formal learning, are rarely validated and certified by learning providers. This leaves a huge amount of progress and development that cannot be demonstrated or proven to potential stakeholders. Therefore, validation represents a considerable opportunity for vulnerable target groups and those people working with them.

One approach to validate competence developments is LEVEL5 – a system developed and piloted in a series of European-funded projects since 2005.

LEVEL5: The core principle

LEVEL5 is a unique system to validate competences and competence developments and to create competence oriented learning pathways in non-formal and informal learning contexts. It is especially suitable for the assessment and documentation of personal, social and organisational competences.⁴

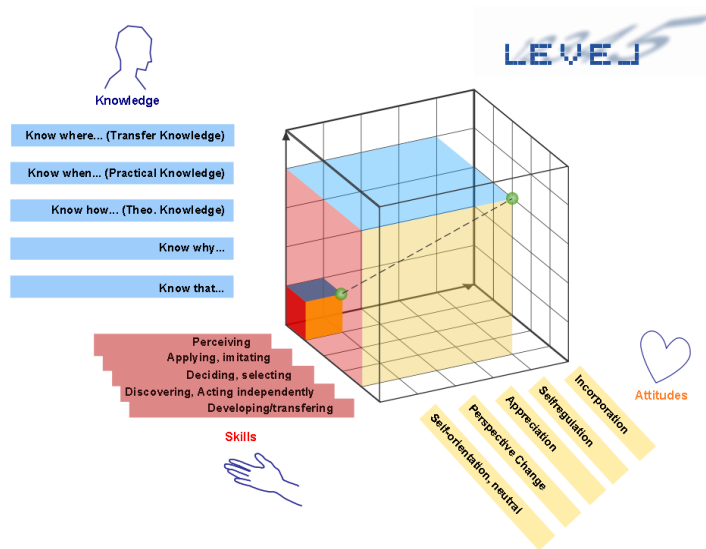
The LEVEL5 approach builds on the notion that a “competence“ is the ability to apply a synthesis of:

- knowledge,
- skills and
- attitudes

in a particular situation and with a particular quality” (CEDEFOP 2006).

Since the age of the enlightenment we know by the works of the Swiss pedagogue Pestalozzi that learning happens with "head, heart and hand". In recent years neurobiological (brain) research has again clearly demonstrated that the non-cognitive dimensions are of special importance for learning.

⁴ The “Key Competences for Lifelong Learning – A European Framework” is an annex of a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning that was published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* on 30 December 2006/L394 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_394/l_39420061230en00100018.pdf).



The LEVEL5 methodology is based on these notions. Consequently, the LEVEL5 system is based on this model to assess, evidence, and validate the cognitive, activity related and affective competence developments (cognition, actions, values) in informal and non-formal learning contexts. Individual or group competences are evaluated in a process-orientated way and, if desired, visualised in a three-dimensional cube model and fully documented in a specific software system.

LEVEL5 focuses on learning processes as they represent potentials, too. For this reason two assessments are foreseen: the first one at the beginning of a learning activity and the second one at a later stage after a certain period of practice. When comparing the results of the two assessments you will be able to see how a competence has evolved.

In the three-dimensional model, the so-called LEVEL5 cube, developments of knowledge, skills and attitudes are visualised. These levels are defined through reference systems – the core of the LEVEL5 system. A reference system describes a given competence on five levels in each competence dimension – from beginner to competent expert. These reference systems are adaptable to any target groups and learning context.

The use of LEVEL5 in COME IN

The LEVEL5 approach was customised and contextualised to the project context. Reference systems for relevant competences were established, e.g. applying easy language with refugees or dealing with diversity, where these competences are described in a tangible way.

The LEVEL5 procedure for trainers

The practical application of the LEVEL5 follows these steps:

- Reflect about your learning context and identify your learning objectives in the given context – we will call this „learning project“. (If you strive for a certificate, you will have to describe your learning project briefly either in the software or the offline template.)
- Select a competence you wish to further develop and/or reflect on from the list of competences.

- Do a first assessment at the beginning of the learning phase: Read the competence description and the reference system and identify your competence level in each of the three dimensions. Give reasons or examples that prove your rating.
- Pursue your learning objectives in the given context.
- Do the second assessment at the end of the learning phase: Read the competence description and the reference system and identify your competence level in each of the three dimensions again. Give reasons or examples that prove your rating. If you wish to receive a certificate, also write a summary of the learning process for each dimension.
- Receive a certificate: If you wish, you may receive a LEVEL5 certificate which evidences and visualises your learning progress in your selected competence field. For this purpose you need to document your learning activity and the outcomes of your assessment. There are two ways to do that: via the online self-assessment interface accessible through the online platform or via an offline template which is part of the REST Training Material.
- After you have finished the documentation, contact your national COME IN coordinator or directly to info@level5.de and receive your certificate within one week.

How long does it take and what will it cost

As to the time needed to apply the LEVEL5 procedure, this very much depends on the assessment concept. Estimate approx. half an hour to reflect and document the rating for all three dimensions for one self-assessment. This is done twice in the process. Of course other methods of assessment are possible, for example in a peer-to-peer setting or based on exercises.

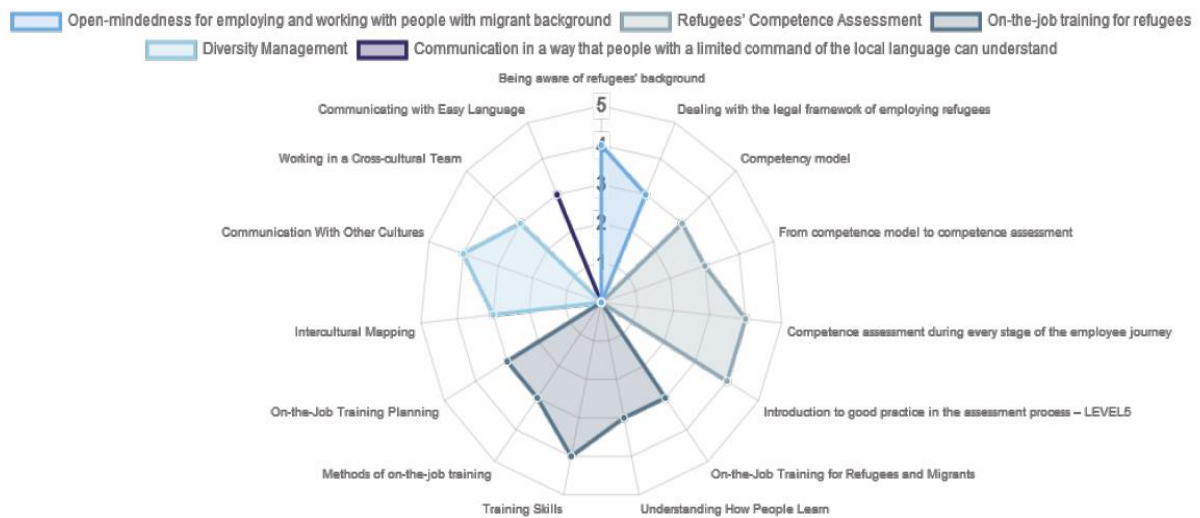
Apart from that you may require some time to think of suitable activities to promote your learning process.

The use of LEVEL5 and the issuing of certificates within COME IN is free of costs. If you wish to use LEVEL5 after the end of the project, you may join the REVEAL association, who is owner of the software, to become a licensed partner. For further information contact info@reveal-eu.org.

Competence assessment – Quick check

If you do not aim for a comprehensive European certificate, but are rather interested in a quick check of your own competences within the COME IN framework, we do offer a quick assessment tool via a multiple choice online questionnaire. This is done by answering a short list of statements per competence and it is *available without registering on the moodle platform*. Learners can even fill in the questions per separate competence on their phone to get a direct visualization of their competences.

This way participants can compare their results and see how their competences have developed over time. The results are displayed and visualized in a spider web model:



4.4 Copyright rules

In case you were already wondering about your rights to use these training materials in the trainings that you offer yourself, you can find below the most important information about our copyright rules:

Good news first:

You are allowed to share, reproduce and redistribute the material in any format or medium that you want. You can also change and/or build on the material.

Here are the rules and conditions to do so:

The COME IN consortium decided to implement the following copyright rules: CC BY-NC-SA, and that stands for Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike.

You must provide appropriate copyright and other proprietary notices, include a link to the license, and indicate whether any changes have been made. This information may be provided in any reasonable manner, but not in such a way as to create the impression that the Licensor is specifically endorsing you or your use. Furthermore, the material cannot be used for commercial activities. If you modify, or directly build upon the material, you may distribute your contributions only under the same license as the original. You may not use any additional clauses or technical procedures that legally prohibit others from doing anything that the License permits.

5. Our implementation experiences

During the project the partners transferred the COME IN training approach consisting of face-to-face workshops, networking and community building, the online platform in their local communities. The results of the piloting were documented and incorporated in national reports, with a special emphasis on challenges met, solutions found, areas for improvement and on the individual impact of the competence validation of the participants. In this chapter we will present our implementation approaches in the six partner countries as well as our key outcomes.

5.1 Country specific implementation approaches

Each of the participating partner countries was confronted with different framework conditions and starting situations when implementing the COME IN approach. In the following, the country context of each partner country is briefly discussed and the implementation approach is then presented.

Maybe you wonder what kind of outcomes we achieved with all these activities. Have we been able to inspire our participants regarding the inclusion of refugees in the labour market? Did the COME IN training approach generate some relevant impact? To showcase our results, we collected some of the most impressive success stories from our partner countries. These success stories showcase individuals and businesses that implemented the new knowledge they gained through COME IN in their workplace and actively work towards a more inclusive labour market in Europe. You can find a short description of the success stories in written form within the following country specific implementation approaches as well as on our [website](#) in multimedia format such as videos and presentations.

5.1.1 Austria

The Country Context

Of the 264.520 unemployed people in Austria in June 2019, 83.525 do not have Austrian citizenship. Among this number there are 15.552 persons entitled to asylum and 2.538 persons with subsidiary protection. In June 2016, 870 persons entitled to asylum and 196 persons with subsidiary protection have been seeking for an apprenticeship. At the same time, 25.211 people without Austrian citizenship have been attending training courses, among this number have been 9.357 persons entitled to asylum and 2.114 persons with subsidiary protection.

Implementation method

National pilots were organized with 4 to 8 participants per workshop. These pilots were based on the COME IN training modules and were delivered as blended

learning modality with alternating face-to-face workshops, e-learning support via the platform, and transfer projects in the enterprises.

Participants could select face-to-face workshops from the modular catalogue according to their relevance to their own work. The following modules were available:

- Module 1: Refugees' Background
- Module 2: Competence Assessment
- Module 3: Learning on the job
- Module 4: Diversity Management
- Module 5: Easy Language

In the sessions, the learning material was introduced to the participants, the goals were explained, the mission was presented and the participants were asked to register and create accounts for the online platform.

The workshops were held in German. Tools such as PC and projector, voice recorder, attendance lists, camera and alarm clock were used. At the end of each session, participants were asked to complete an evaluation form.



Austrian success stories

Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz (Austrian Red Cross)

The Austrian Red Cross has two success stories to report.

Ajub comes from Afghanistan and lives in Austria now. In Afghanistan he had been working as a plumber and as a mechanic, in Austria he participated in the voluntary integration year. Due to the very good impression he had left, he obtained a job at the Red Cross in the Austrian province Tyrol. At the beginning, he faced difficulties with learning the German language, especially with the dialect that spoken in Tyrol. What he experiences during his work and his participation in the COME IN project is that for the successful integration in the Austrian labour market, an essential factor is to be always on time and to work very neatly.

A video of Alem's success story can be found on the COME IN [website](#).



Alem is originally from Faryab (north of Afghanistan) and came to Austria in 2014. He speaks 5 languages and had been working as an English teacher and interpreter in Afghanistan. In Austria he gathered professional experience by doing an apprenticeship in the field of refugee care and by working again as an interpreter for the Diakonie. In 2017, he started to work for the Austrian railways in the integration sector. Alem also volunteered as an ambassador for the Xchange project for the Austrian Red Cross. What he learned from his previous experience and his participation in the COME IN project is that only by learning the German language and socialising with the people, the integration into the labour market in Austria can be successful.

A video of Alem's success story can be found on the COME IN [website](#).



Kindergruppe Purz'lbaum

The Kindergruppe Purz'lbaum is located at the Pensioners' Residence in Hetzendorf in Vienna. Claudia Schmid has been leading the children's group since 2004. In the framework of the voluntary integration year, Ms Schmid and her colleagues were happy to welcome migrants in their team. What her colleagues Hend and Rania from Syria experienced is that the most important factor for the successful integration into the Austrian labour market is to learn the German language. Many problems are due to language barriers, although the support by the colleagues can help to face arising challenges.

A video of their success story can be found on the COME IN [website](#).



5.1.2 Belgium

The Country Context

Belgium does not score well at all in the employment of migrants. Belgium has one of the lowest employment rates of non-EU immigrants in the entire EU. Moreover, Eurostat calculated that the gap between the employment rate of non-EU immigrants and the indigenous population is the largest in Belgium. 42% of job seekers with a migration background find employment. One in four asylum seekers finds work after a year, but often with a poor employment status (Steunpunt Werk, 2018). Most asylum seekers in Belgium in 2018 came from Syria, Palestine and Afghanistan.

In Belgium, Trendhuis introduced and presented the COME In training course during a first multiplier event on June 3th 2019 and a second pilot training course for HR on June 25th 2019. The first multiplier event was held in an asylum centre for refugees in Broechem, Flanders, operated by the Belgian Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (FEDASIL). During this occasion Trendhuis presented the overall project and its results as well as an introduction to the first module of the developed training course, 'Background of refugees'.

The second piloting was facilitated by 'Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen', a major NGO in Flanders defending the rights for people fleeing from war, violence or prosecution. Here, Trendhuis presented the following four modules of the COME IN training course:

- Module 2: Competence Assessment
- Module 3: Learning on the job
- Module 4: Diversity Management
- Module 5: Easy Language

Implementation method

Both pilot implementation trainings were organised in the form of workshop sessions with interested companies and organisations. Following a general overview of the project and a demonstration of the e-learning courses on the Moodle platform, Trendhuis presented the content of the five created modules using a blend of Powerpoint presentation, videos, and group discussions.

In order to strengthen the awareness of the participants and offer good practices, the two piloting moments were set in an asylum centre and the major Flemish refugee organisation. In both occasions testimonies from refugees and job coaches working with refugees gave the participants a good insight in the needs and opportunities for employment.

The participants were subsequently split up in different groups, each discussing a set of fixed questions on one of the following topics: competence assessment, on-the-job training, diversity management and easy language.

The main results of the group discussions were finally shared and discussed in a plenary group discussion. Using this method the participants could share each other's good practices on hiring and integrating refugees on the workplace and were able to give feedback on the created COME IN content.



Belgium success stories

Ecoso



Ecoso stands for **EC**ological and **S**ocial Entrepreneurship. Our goal is to create employment and strengthen competences for people who have a greater distance from the regular **labour** market within an ecological context. We strongly believe in diversity and inclusion.



Aïda Somers
Coach at Ecoso



What is the most important challenge for you regarding the employment of refugees/migrants?

"We currently already employ refugees/migrants as volunteers. The challenge is to connect them with the right people in the workplace and prepare the team to integrate them. The language barrier is also a major challenge."



Why did you join the Come In training?

"I participated in the COME In training because I did an internship with refugees at Welcome in Mechelen"

"I thought it would be interesting to see what we can change in the company to make the workplace more pleasant for newcomers"

What have you learned?

"I especially learned how to be a better bridge figure and point of contact for refugees and migrants"

"You get much more information than you might think, such as about the "hidden jobs" at VDAB and how and where you can request training for refugees / migrants"



As part of Corporate Social Responsibility, Time4Society wants to help companies and their employees to experience this vision in a practical and concrete way by organizing societal teambuilding's. Time4Society invites companies and their employees to do business and work in a sustainable way.



CSR coordinator
Time4Society vzw

What is the most important challenge for you regarding the employment of refugees/migrants?

The biggest challenges are reaching candidates from the refugee community and integrating them in the workplace. Many companies want to, but are very cautious about general administrative, legal and structural obstacles, but also about cultural differences and the reactions of colleagues.



Why did you join the Come In training?

"Diversity in the labour market is a very sensitive theme. Increasingly employers want to tackle this, but lack the right approach. By following the training, I have gained more knowledge about this theme."

What have you learned?

"The testimonials where very interesting. They showed that refugees and migrants are eager to work and have the right competencies but have few or no access to the labour market"



As an interprofessional employers' federation, we unite, defend and strengthen social enterprises, as employers and entrepreneurs from all sectors, to increase their social and economic impact.



Fatma Qorlazja
HR Advisor
Verso

What is the most important challenge for you regarding the employment of refugees/migrants?

The biggest challenge in terms of employment that I experience in my contacts with employers are the language barriers and the uncertainty that exists with regard to the stay in Belgium.



Why did you join the Come In training?

"It is important for our sectors and social entrepreneurship to know what benefits they have to engage newcomers and / or refugees in their company."

What have you learned?

"Participating in the training was relevant for me because I became acquainted with various relevant partners."

"I also got confirmation that the newcomers are here to stay and we only get benefits to integrate these people as quickly as possible"

5.1.3 Bulgaria

The Country Context

Bulgaria is still considered a transit country and only a relatively small number of the refugees (couple of hundreds) are willing to stay permanently and settle down in the country. Although this fact has been confirmed by all relevant studies about refugee integration in Bulgaria, the low number of people deciding to stay in the country should not discourage and/or prevent employers to consider them as a possible target group for employees especially at the backdrop of a dramatic skills shortage.

After the drastic increase in the number of people seeking international protection in the period 2013-2016, a downwards trend can be observed in 2017 and 2018. According to the most recent data of the State Agency for Refugees in Bulgaria, the number of asylum applications since the beginning of 2018 is only 1906, compared to 20.000 both in 2015 and 2016.

The gender aspect also has an impact on the employability potential of refugees, as due to cultural and religious traditions, women from most of the countries of the origin usually do not take an active part in the economic life. Children make up about 32% of applications for international protection, of which 19% are aged 0-13 years and 13% are 14-17 years old.

According to the interviewed employers and stakeholders the most relevant barriers for employment of refugees in Bulgaria are the lack of language knowledge, lack of documents and credentials, and the lack of information about the cultural/religious specifics which often provokes subconscious fears, stereotypes and prejudices. Furthermore, the uncertain length of stay is a problem for long-term investments in training and further qualification efforts of the employers, but they are ready to cope with that, provided the refugees are really willing to learn and to further upgrade their knowledge and skills. However, there are already multiple success stories of labour market integration of refugees in Bulgaria in several industries, in which some companies could be considered as pioneers and role models for further employers to undertake this step.

Implementation method

The Implementation of the COME IN approach in Bulgaria was carried out within 3 months, starting from March, 2019 whereas the coaching and support of employers and refugees is still in process.

As employers have limited time and cannot spend a full training day, the piloting in Bulgaria was organised in 4-hours workshops and some of them combined with job fairs (job matching events). In order to expand the scope of the project implementation – the first workshop was held on 25th of March in Plovdiv. In this city is based Trakia Economic Zone one of the most dynamic business zones in Bulgaria with concentrated production companies in it. Due to the labour force shortages, great

interest from employers was shown for the first workshop. The second workshop was held on 21st of May in Sofia combined with job fair.

In addition to the training workshops and job fairs, CATRO team has been providing coaching and counselling services to the interested employers, which are still going on even after the end of the trainings and will be continued even after the end of the project.



Bulgarian success stories

Convoy World

Company profile

Convoy world is a manufacturing company situated in a suburb near the Bulgarian capital city Sofia. In the last couple of years, the company is developing very fast, expanding on new markets in the EU, which increased their personnel needs, in particular in the production facilities. This was one of the drivers for the management to enhance the scope of their potential candidates, giving chance to people from different socially or economically disadvantaged groups, especially for the positions requiring low-skilled labour.

Previous experience with refugees

In this context the management of the company also came up with the idea to attract refugees from the three centers in Sofia and requested more information from the State Agency for refugees how to proceed.

As they did not get enough practical information how to proceed, they decided to search some support from the Career Center at Caritas Sofia, which are very active in the job matching process of refugees in Bulgaria.

Thanks to their efforts, they managed to make some a very successful hiring of a refugee from Iran, because the man was very skilled in the particular operation (of metal cutting machines) which compensated a bit the fact that he did not speak Bulgarian so well. After few months, he managed to meet and even exceed the

management expectations, becoming one of the best employees and role model for the other employees. Despite the fact that the employee did not get a positive decision about his refugee status, and had to leave the country, the management of the company had a very positive experience and decided to continue their efforts in this direction.

COME IN approach

They hired few more refugees mainly from Iraq and Afghanistan and not only from the centers in Sofia but also in Harmanli. The first contact to CATRO was mainly after the job fair with refugees, after which the COME IN approach was presented to the management and they requested CATRO counseling and coaching services in relation to the national programs for subsidized employment.

Furthermore, they took part in the COME IN workshop dedicated to topics like competence validation and diversity management at work to share their experience with other companies willing to hire refugees which was very valuable for all of them.

Refugees' integration

In the beginning the main goal of the company CONVOY world was to hire refugees in order to meet their rising demand for personnel in the manufacturing. However, after the first successful hiring of the refugee from Iran and especially after getting to know their personal stories, they decided to invest more efforts in this direction and hired more than 10 refugees in the last 5 years. Starting step by step, the management actually developed a holistic integration approach, which was also supported by the other employees in the company. They invested own resources (in the form of dedicated time and money) in the vocational and language training of the refugees, through establishing fruitful cooperation with NGOs like Caritas Sofia and the Refugee Integration and Information Center at the Bulgarian red Cross.

Currently, the company also offers support for relocation (especially for the refugees in Harmanli which is almost 300 km away from the manufacturing site of the company) in the form of housing provision against reduced rent, transport costs, food and a flexible working time. Moreover, the management has helped alone standing women refugees to enroll their children in the local school and to support health insurance provision for all family members.

The other employees in the company did also provide some support in the form of providing clothing and other necessary goods for appropriate living which happened in a natural way without any request from the Management.

The main success factors in the story of CONVOY World that despite some administrative difficulties at the beginning with the State Agency for Refugees they did not give up and tried to find other ways to meet their business needs. They established successful and sustainable partnerships with NGOs as well as with companies like CATRO through which they managed not only to identify the appropriate and motivated people for their open positions, but also to share their

experience with other companies, who want to go through this adventure. They shared not only the positive achievements but also the lessons learned which confirm the reality that most of the refugees coming to Bulgaria actually do not intend to stay here in the long-run, however the efforts to offer full integration support for 5-6 or more people are worth enough to continue.



HAPPY



Company profile

Happy Bar & Grill is a chain of daily restaurants in Bulgaria. The exclusive quality of food and the high standard of service account for the best-in-class brand Happy Bar & Grill. The chain is the largest number of restaurants in Bulgaria located in the heart of larger towns and cities, or along the highways and the main roads. This quality cannot be achieved without the Happy personnel which is trained to follow the high corporate standards. In the recent years there is a stagnation at the Bulgarian labour market which also affected the restaurant chain. That is why the company has opened the professional opportunities to different target groups which are socially or economically disadvantaged, especially for the positions

requiring low-skilled labour.

Previous experience with refugees

Happy did not have previous experience with employing refugees before they met CATRO and the COME IN approach. During the initial talks with CATRO, the HR manager of Happy has showed great interest to provide professional opportunities to refugees and open-mindedness in terms of the difficulties they may encounter in the integration process. However, the HR manager had some concerns if the personnel will have prejudice to have a refugee colleague.

COME IN approach

The first contact to CATRO was on an event organized by UNHCR, on which the COME IN approach was presented to the HR manager. The company has shown great interest in hiring refugees but have never went through the whole recruitment process and did not know anything about the target group (their statute, work permission, cultural differences, etc.). That is why the HR manager has requested CATRO counseling and coaching services in order to help them contact the refugees and also explain them the legal and administrative procedures around refugees' employment. Furthermore, they took part in the COME IN workshop dedicated to topics like Competence validation and On-the-job training in order to prepare themselves.

Refugees' integration

The main goal of Happy is to provide professional opportunities to all refugees that are planning to stay permanently in Bulgaria and are willing to work as kitchen personnel. Unfortunately, in the beginning there was low interest from refugees. There were two ladies who has went through the Search and Selection process successfully but due to their religion and cultural norms– they did not accept the job offers. Their husbands insisted that they cannot work as there are women and have to stay at home and look after their children.

However, in May, 2019 a lady from Pakistan who had previous experience as a cook in her homeland, has started as a kitchen personnel responsible for the food preparations. The position is based in a restaurant in Sofia –Manastirski livadi district. The lady does not speak Bulgarian, but the Happy team has welcomed her warmly and they are managing to communicate with gestures. The restaurant manager has shared that she has expected to be difficult for the team and the lady to work together and for her as a manager to integrate the refugee at the workplace but with some ideas from the COME IN module about the On-the-job training (e.g. Training methods –Demonstration), she has managed to cope with the initial obstacles that were in place. In addition, Happy has made a compromise with the uniforms that every employee has work. Due to religious reasons, the refugee wanted to keep her hijab which was accepted by Happy. During her integration there were also some employment issues that have arisen as the refugee women did not understand the salary taxes and the way she will be paid. Here Happy has contacted Caritas (an NGO Organisation that support refugees) in order to find a

translator who has help both sides – the employer and employee to communicate and discuss transparently the salary formation and the Bulgarian employment law. The refugee women is satisfied from the job she has, the flexibility and understanding from the Happy management and the way the other employees have integrated her

5.1.4 Germany

The Country Context

Between 2015 and 2018, hundreds of thousands of people from their home countries came to Germany. Soon there was talk of a "refugee crisis", which is still a political issue today.

At the end of 2018, almost 1.7 million people were seeking protection in Germany. Of these, 1.2 million are recognised as refugees or benefit from a ban on deportation.

Currently, around 35 percent of refugees are employed. The aim of the Federal Employment Agency is to achieve a rate of 50 percent by 2025. This would then correspond to the quota for the group of all other migrants in Germany.

50 percent may sound low. But the employment rate also includes children, young people and pensioners who, for good reasons, do not work and reduce the rate. By way of comparison, the employment rate for Germans is 69.4 percent.

In Germany the implementation of the COME IN training modules was carried out over a period of 7 months. Between January and August 2019 one multiplier event and five training sessions were held. During the multiplier event the Landkreis Kassel and BUPNET presented the project, its benefits for the region and the training offers. The aim was to attract participants to the workshops and interest local stakeholders and multipliers. The following training session were carried out subsequently:

Implementation method

During the COME IN implementation five training sessions were carried out. Prior to workshops suitable trainers were identified and contacted. In preparation to the workshops, the training materials developed in COME IN were discussed as well as the framework and aim of the workshops. The trainers were free to decide how to use and adjust the COME IN training materials (e.g. which parts should be delivered as presentation, which parts could be worked on in group discussions) as long as the content was respected.

Every training session was a half day long and started with a short introduction of the COME IN project and it's aims and targets. After that the trainings included theoretical input as well as interactive formats as discussion rounds, group work, or experience exchange. In the end of every session the e-learning platform was

presented to the participants as further means of finding information, materials and to connect and exchange with other stakeholders.

The first four sessions were broadly advertised and open for all interested participants. They concluded with a network session, where participants were able to exchange and get in contact with each other and regional integration experts while having snacks and drinks.

The last training session was a comprehensive in-house training for Caritas Kassel that was specifically targeted to the needs of health care professionals specialised in caring for the elderly.



German success story

SMA Solar Technology AG

“When the needs of a company and refugees come together”



The company SMA - Solar Technology AG is one of the major players and a global leading specialist for photovoltaic system technology. For more than 35 years, SMA has been setting technological trends and driving the development of renewable energies.

In order to maintain this position, they must be able to adapt quickly to changes in the markets - especially to the need for qualified personnel in their own company. The challenge posed by the shortage of skilled personnel in Germany therefore opened up new opportunities for SMA. In order to cover their own interests and needs, they began to train the next generation of electronics technicians and engineers in their own facilities. The group of trainees also involves some young refugees, which is not without challenge for the company and trainers.



Even before the start of COME IN the German project partners Landkreis Kassel and BUPNET were in contact with SMA, so that the company could directly be involved in the project activities. Training materials for modules such as "Easy Language at the workplace" or "On-the-job training for refugees" were well received and met with great interest.

The two young refugees Mehdi and Hedayatullah are trainees at SMA. They are enthusiastic, open and committed to learn new things and have the ambition to become part of the SMA family. Both have a technical background and a generally high interest in technology and electronics. Since both have only been in Germany for three and a half years, their knowledge and skills in dealing with the German language are still being developed. This means that the central topic and the greatest challenge was and still is the German language.

Above all, the differences between the taught school German and the technical language - as Mehdi noted - increases the challenge. In practice, the biggest obstacle so far occurred in vocational school regarding the phrasing of the questions in exams. The structure of these questions is designed and developed by the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry and must - as Mr. Grebe the in-house trainer at SMA is convinced - be adapted to this new type of trainee.

As the COME IN project showed in one of its modules, a simpler language is the shortest way to make things more plausible and understandable. In fact, it turned out to be the crucial point. On the basis of the COME IN materials the complicated questions were simplified and explained to Medhi and Hedayatullah. Because only by understanding the question an answer is possible at all. With the input of the COME IN project changes were possible and language barriers could be overcome.

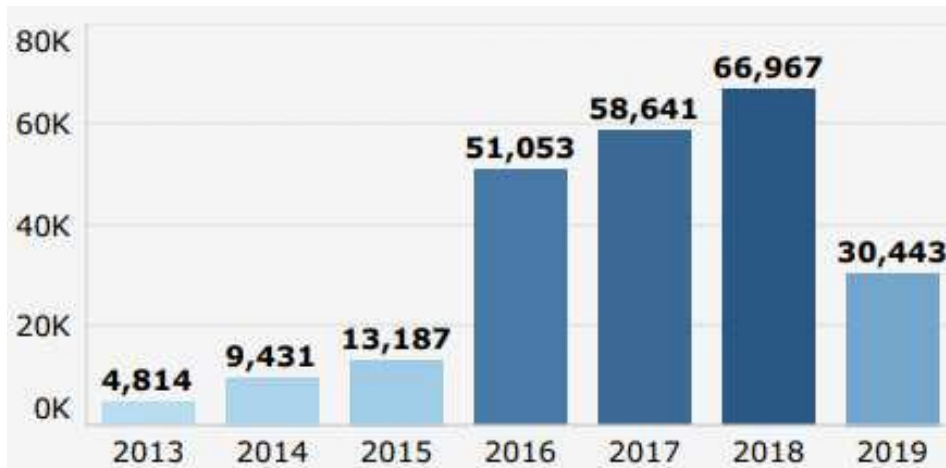


5.1.5 Greece

The Country Context

According to the Asylum Service of the Ministry of Citizen Protection of the Hellenic Republic, the situation in Greece is as follows⁵:

⁵ Hellenic Republic, Statistics of the Asylum Service (from 07.06.2013 to 30.06.2019).



Implementation method

All five Modules developed in the framework of COME IN were delivered in face-to-face Workshops:

- Module 1: Refugees' Background
- Module 2: Competence Assessment
- Module 3: Learning on the job
- Module 4: Diversity Management
- Module 5: Easy Language

All participants attended all Modules that were delivered based on the blended learning approach. Many of the interactive activities developed according to the content of the modules were implemented by the expert trainer and the cooperation of all participants. The e-learning platform where the Modules are already uploaded in Greek facilitated the training process.

In total twenty representatives of companies and organizations participated in the Workshops implemented at Four Elements' facilities in Athens, Greece. Among participants there were managers of companies that already employ or are willing to employ migrants and refugees, heads of human resources departments of companies, in-house trainers of enterprises, adult trainers, as well as representatives of NGOs whose actions are closely related to migrants' and refugees' inclusion to the labour market and society in general.

Following a brief presentation of the Project's actions and objectives, participants were introduced to the platform and the COME-IN modules. The process was carried out in Greek, while the English version of the platform was, also, presented. Two short coffee breaks were organized each day of the Workshops, in order for participants to both assimilate the knowledge and socialize with each other. At the end of each day, participants were encouraged to share their experience on issues discussed during the Workshop, thus facilitating the exchange of real-life examples of inclusion.

In overall, the pilot implementation in Greece was successfully completed. Even though attracting participants and effectively organizing the Workshops was challenging, the final results of implementation justify the effort. As a main finding of

the whole process, it can be said that the available material was positively received in terms of organization, content and sufficiency, even though more focus could be put on practical aspects. The Workshops were characterized as necessary, as participants commented that it would have been very difficult for them to get engaged with the Project if they hadn't participated in the Workshops.

Greek success stories

CPCEngineering

“A small move for such a great difference”

The company

CPCEngineering is a rapidly progressing company in the field of electromechanical and buildings design and construction, now expanding to photovoltaic systems and net metering services. The company is always looking to recruit new employees who are willing to learn on the job and improve their skills and competences through practically applying their theoretical knowledge.

The challenge

Vangelis, an electrical and mechanical engineer and one of the founders of CPCEngineering, participated in the COME IN workshops and shared his story: *“For some weeks I was “complaining” to all of my friends and colleagues that I could not find a young engineer to hire for performing some basic designing for us. During an occasional dinner, Marianna, a very close friend of mine, told me that she had a person in mind, but it was a very special case. And then she explained that she had met Amir and his family at a community meeting, their kids started to play together and she started talking with Amir and his wife. It turned out that Amir had arrived from Iraq five months ago, and although he was a mechanical engineer he was working as a cashier to a local mini-market. To make things short, one week later Amir was at my office explaining how he was studying for his Masters in Mainz, but had to go back to Iraq to support his wife who was then expecting their first child. The truth is that I was looking to employ a young graduate who would be more flexible with working schedules and tasks. But when I talked with Amir, I knew he deserved this chance. The only problem? Very basic Greek language skills, let alone engineering terminology.*

The solution

“Again, Marianna had the solution! She proposed the COME IN Training. Following the training, especially the part about “easy language”, I could feel the change during my interaction with Amir. At first, I started correlating English words and expressions with Greek ones, trying to simplify them without changing the true meaning. After some days I realized that I did not have to try anymore, because I was actually doing it spontaneously, as part of my routine. Of course, Amir was very receptive and willing to try, to learn, to integrate. I noticed that during breaks he started talking with colleagues using a mixture of English and Greek, a situation

that sometimes ended up in laughs, of course in a very positive and comprehensive way by all!

The impact

Vangelis continues on the impact of his effort: “The job was going very well, every day Amir was using more and more Greek, transiting from “easy Greek” to “regular Greek”. His colleagues “established” for him the “One new word per day” challenge, where Amir learned one new word every day, and at the end of the week he had to use them in a sentence. It was actually quite amusing! But for me, I realized what we’ve actually accomplished as a company in August, during our annual weekend to the beach – a two-day trip for all members of the company and their families. Amir was there with his family, talking and joking with everyone, his kids playing with other kids in the beach, his wife getting introduced to everyone with a big smile. This was all I needed from the beginning, I felt so lucky and complete during these two days. I remember that at the COME IN training it was mentioned that the ulterior objective was social integration of refugees, through interaction at the work place. And I instantly thought “Oh my God, that’s it!”. Now, I cannot imagine how things would have turned out had I decided to keep looking for a young graduate ”.

5.1.6 Italy

The Country Context

Italy is one of the European countries with major numbers of immigrants arriving by the Mediterranean Sea. A significant part of them stays in the country, apply for asylum and move towards social integration. According to the UNHCR, 1.551 people arrived in Italy in the first 5 months of 2019. The arrivals are decreasing compared to the previous years – first 5 months of 2018 approx. 13.000 arrivals, in 2017 approx. 60.000 arrivals.

Recently, the integration (social and labour) of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees has been strongly affected by the exchange of political representation and the new law introduced in December 2018 - *Decreto Sicurezza, 113/2018*. This law decree changed the system of reception and led to irregularity and precariousness of immigrants in the Italian territory. For this reason, employers and organisations working in the field of immigration and integration urgently need up-to-date information and additional support regarding legal and administrative aspects.

Also, economic specifics affected the piloting implementation in Italy - especially the structure of participants. Firstly, the labour market is performing quite poorly. The unemployment rate in Italy is 10,7 in 2019 and 18,4 in southern regions. Secondly, small, micro and family businesses predominate on the employers' side in Sicily.

In this context, CESIE had to respond to a smaller interest on the side of commercial enterprises. On the other hand, non-profit organisations, social cooperatives and

social enterprises, mediation agencies and reception centres expressed an avid interest in the COME IN training. At the end, roughly a half of the participants were representing direct employers.

Implementation method

The methodology of the piloting in Italy included (1) 3 face-to-face meetings, (2) use and promotion of the online platform, (3) individual communication via mail, phone and in person in order to provide individual support, receive questions and feedback and explore prospective success stories.

The first event took place on the 19th of June 2019. It was a half-day event combining the multiplier event and piloting of the first module (M1 Refugees' background including legal aspects of their labour integration). It was organised at *Teatro Garibaldi* in Palermo. The venue of the first event was chosen with the intention to attract larger audience and offer an *aperitivo* in the theatre garden at the conclusion of the training session.

The second session on the 1st of July 2019 was dedicated to the M2 and M3 (Competence assessment and on-the-job training). The last face-to-face event was organised on the 10th of July 2019 and dealt with the M4 and M5 (Diversity management and Easy language). Both meetings were about 4 hours long and took place in the training room at CESIE.

During the face-to-face training, we used primarily PPT presentations and additionally my-VITA platform and multimedia. The training methodology adopted during the face-to-face sessions combined frontal lesson, discussion, questions & answers, interactive activities, self-assessment and distribution of handouts with further information.



Italian success stories

IKENGA

CESIE identified and described the success story of IKENGA, an intercultural association established in December 2018 in Palermo by a group of activists and artists from Biafra, Italy, Bangladesh, Gambia, Senegal, Nigeria and Tunisia.

IKENGA promotes human rights, intercultural and intergenerational dialogue among

local citizens, asylum seekers and migrants of the first and the second generation through discussions, courses, conferences, projections and other educational initiatives with the goal to encourage and facilitate active participation of all people.

You can find a video of the full story on the COME IN [website](#).



Success Story - Cooperativa Al Revès



Al Revès is a social cooperative from Palermo, Italy that runs a tailoring laboratory and vintage shop "Sartoria Sociale" where respect for the environment and the people are the core values and where creativity is without borders. Indeed, the diversity, mixture and union of Italian and African styles results in original designs often made of recycled materials.

Sartoria Sociale, a social tailoring laboratory and shop established by Al Revès in 2012, offers an internship opportunity to young refugees and migrants who have professional or educational background in tailoring and dress-making. From the beginning of the collaboration, interns are accompanied by a senior tailor who assesses their actual competences and teaches them necessary tailoring techniques. During the process of on-boarding, managers and trainers try to mediate

cultural and religious differences influencing the work performance and team interactions. Typically, they deal with time management, working habits, different ways of tailoring and language barrier using mainly the strategies of informal mentoring. Sartoria Sociale also employs social workers who strongly supports both labour and social integration of interns and employees with migration background. They also take care of their interns' professional development and career path. At the completion of an internship, the interns can be offered a permanent job or are provided with individual counselling on their next education or employment possibilities.

Representatives of Al Revès and Sartoria Sociale participated in the COME IN Training attending the piloting sessions dedicated to 3 modules. The Module 1: Refugees' background and legal aspects was evaluated as very useful and up-to-date. It was found valuable especially because all the recent updates on residence and work permits were presented and discussed along the legal measures of refugees'/migrants' employment. Going beyond the COME IN training content, Al Revès expressed strong interest in the self-employment possibilities for migrants. Some of the tailors working at Sartoria Sociale have ambition to become freelancers, create and sell their own designs and the Cooperative is supporting the realisation of their dream. To support professional and personal growth of these employees, CESIE developed an additional material explaining and summarizing information on self-employment possibilities including the documents and other pre-requisitions needed which can be used by all social workers, mentors and migrants.

A social worker from Al Revès also took part in the piloting of Module 2: Competence assessment and Module 3: On-the-job training. These modules were appreciated because the cooperative offers also services of individual counselling, career orientation, job shadowing and occupational rehabilitation supported by professional tutors.

The content of the COME IN training materials covers topics highly relevant to the activities of the cooperative, e.g. initial evaluation of competences and evaluation of competence development in non-formal environment including techniques of autobiographical narration and the STAR method which Sartoria Sociale can use during the recruitment and selection process.

Considering the Module 3, this employer can strongly benefit from the training materials dedicated to mentoring and demonstration OJT method. All interns have to go through an initial training focused on occupational orientation, work execution and social inclusion. The OJT techniques and methods presented during the training are therefore highly useful in case of the cooperative. Furthermore, the demonstration is an ideal technique for teaching practical manual skills such as sawing or needlework.

A social worker from Sartoria found very useful all the training materials dealing with cultural differences, intercultural mediation and diversity management. As she shared, they often work with migrants who might have difficulties to interact with local colleagues and are at risk of being excluded from the team. In these cases,

social workers need great professional and interpersonal competences to help the interns not only with labour integration, but also with social integration.

Participation of AI Revès in the COME IN project was advantageous also for the other participants and CESIE staff for their rich experience and original ideas they shared during the meeting. Participants had the opportunity to learn from each other, broaden their horizons and make new contacts. Sartoria Sociale as an employer met with local asylum centres supporting refugees and migrants in the research of an occupation. Some of the asylum centres were interested in exploring the opportunities of future collaboration and presenting their clients to Sartoria as possible interns. This can support the future job matching between migrants and employers.

Website of Sartoria Sociale: <https://www.sartoriasociale.com/>

5.2 Key outcomes

Achievements and successes

In terms of key outcomes and results, each partner has identified a number of achievements and success stories which are described in their national reports. A selection of these positive results is presented here:

- The pilot projects have shown the strength of the exchange between cultures and the richness of diversity. All participants – trainers as well as learners – were reminded that they live in multicultural societies.
- The pilot projects created relationship between refugee organisations and companies. The awareness of companies towards refugees and migrants has increased by new contacts and mutual exchanges.
- In all countries the learners have increased their intercultural skills.
- The learners who wanted to assess their competence development received the possibility of having evidence that documented their personal competence development.
- The involved course participants have learnt new tools and exercises for their integration work with refugees, migrants and even native speakers. They are now able to implement recruitment processes for refugees/migrants, competence assessment, on-the-job training and diversity management.
- All project partner organisations have intensified their existing network or created new networking contacts with local organisations, such as companies, NGOs, refugees' associations and training institutions.

Obstacles and Challenges

The COME IN project has faced a few challenges during its piloting phase. In the following lines the most obvious challenges are described.

- Despite the strong employment needs and opportunities within the sectors of hospitality and manufacturing, the partnership had problems in recruiting professionals within these sectors who would attend the COME IN training activities, e.g. workshops.
- A big challenge for all partners was to convince companies and organisations to take some time from their busy schedules to take part in our face-to-face training sessions.

Lessons learned

In conclusion, during the piloting/implementation phase of the project several valuable lessons were drawn.

- It is helpful to start implementing the COME IN training activities in a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere. All groups have benefited from interaction with reliable, respectful and open-minded group members.
- Blended learning is a great tool to enhance a number of competences in various learning settings and to increase the general motivation of learners. The reflection on the learning outcomes contributes to the positive impact of the COME IN activities as it makes the learning more conscious.
- An interactive approach is important to engage the learners. Listening, asking and encouraging are necessary for the trainer and for the other learners. Furthermore, being open-minded, curious, empathetic and flexible support the success of the training.
- The possibility of combining different topics (for example: M2 competence evaluation and M3 on-the-job training) or adding extra material is essential to ensure a coherent and comprehensive content based on the needs of the course participants.

6. Recommendations for strategic implementation

Based on the experiences and feedback made by the trainers and learners involved in the piloting projects, the COME IN project partners have extracted and compiled recommendations for applying the COME IN approach.

6.1 Practical recommendations for carrying out the training sessions

In the following overview the project partners have highlighted practical recommendations on the different themes covered by the training manual.

Promote intercultural understanding

- It's important to create training spaces where diversity and cultural integration is normal, where exchange and cooperation are important, and where experiences are shared i.e. refugee centres, cultural centres, refugee associations,...
- Interactive training is a good opportunity to reach out to stakeholders and organisations and involve them in your work, whether through workshops, job fairs, guided visits or joint activities. It stimulates interest and curiosity, and the activities can also be used to build new contacts and networks.

Remain flexible

- Even though there are employers that are willing to employ refugees and migrants – there is a small number of people who can be employed. For that reason, some employers preferred to combine the workshops with job fairs as they were open to invest time only when they see an added value from the whole process.
- It is always possible to combine different topics and modules or add extra material to the existing modules. This way the content always fulfils the specific needs of your course participants.

Practical training approach

- Adjust the content of the face-to-face meetings to the needs of the participants, take into consideration their professional profiles, experience and specific learning needs.
- Create non-formal moments facilitating networking (between your organisation/trainers and participants and among participants).
- Prefer practical examples, interactive exercises and discussions to a simple frontal lesson. The participants can read the theory at home but they will benefit more from the interaction with others at the face-to-face meetings.

Assessing and evidencing competence development

- It is important to choose an appropriate method for assessing learners' competence development. In our experience the LEVEL5 approach significantly reduces the complexity when visualising and describing learning outcomes and therefore provides an attractive presentation and documentation system for learning.
- Reflection on learning outcomes contributes to the positive impact of learning activities by making learning more conscious.
- Calculate at least half an hour per participant to conduct competence assessment.
- Start by giving concrete examples and explanations for the competence you want to assess.

- Use the reference system to formulate interview questions in a simple language. Working directly with the reference system can be quite abstract and is only recommended with participants who are familiar with competence assessment.

6.2 Implementation of the COME IN approach - strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

The COME IN implementation was carefully documented and evaluated in all partner countries, with a special emphasis on challenges met, solutions found, and identification of areas of improvement. In the last project phase the results were compiled in a SWOT-analysis. SWOT stands for 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats'. The analysis is a framework used to evaluate a competitive position and to develop strategic planning. Via the SWOT analysis internal (*strength and weaknesses*) and external (*opportunities and threats*) factors of our COME IN approach and implementation were assessed, as well as current and future potential. To support your implementation efforts, we want to share our findings with you.

Strengths of the COME IN training

The training materials developed in COME IN

- The content of the training modules address the most important topics of the target group. The participants did not miss any specific content. All relevant aspects are adequately dealt with.
- The content reflects the needs of the target group as identified in research phase.
- The given learning materials can adequately be adapted with regard to the education level or sector specifics of the target group/participants.
- The training modules refer to and complement each other. They follow the typical hiring and integration process at the workplace so that participants get the chance to accompany the entire process with training. Nevertheless, the training was developed in a modular way and the modules can also be used as stand-alone materials.
- The training materials are available for face-to-face workshop as well as for online learning via the e-learning platform.
- The training materials are available in 6 languages (ENG, BE, BG, DE, GR, and IT) and is accessible free of charge for everyone who is interested in them.
- The platform uses a clear design with a focus on content presentation.
- The COME IN training materials tackle among others two very specific topics – tool for employers to assess refugees' competences as well as easy language for employers. Those are very unique modules that distinguish COME IN from other training offers in this field.

Weakness of the COME IN training

- The training materials need to be kept updated and should, as far as possible, be adapted to regional conditions. This refers mainly to the first module, which contains legal aspects that change regularly and often do not have national validity but can differ by region or state.
- Even though materials were developed as close as possible to the needs of the target group, the topic of refugee integration is highly dependent on local circumstances. Also the target group “key staff in enterprises responsible for refugee integration” is highly diverse in their level of knowledge and needs depending on e.g. company size, company structure, branch,... As common in European training concepts, to cover those diversities, the training materials contain parts that are more general and should be adapted by trainers to those specifics of their region and participants to maximise their relevance.

From the organisation-specific strengths and weaknesses of the project partners, helpful aspects for potential imitators of the COME IN approach were derived, that we want to share with you.

Helpful aspects

- Experience in working with the target group enterprises as well as knowledge about refugee integration.
- Cooperating with strong network partners! Many stakeholders are involved in the work integration of refugees. For training providers it is advisable to work in networks with organisations that can support the process, such as NGOs that are working with refugees, asylum centres that are familiar with the needs and challenges of asylum seekers, chambers of commerce or crafts that can act as multipliers, public institutions as administrations or employment agencies whose goal it is to bring as much refugees as possible into employment.

External threats to the COME IN approach

External conditions beyond the control of training providers can have a negative effect on the implementation of a COME IN training. The project team has compiled the following aspects that could hinder the implementation.

- Over the last few years, a growing political shift to the right has been observed in Europe. This has a negative impact on the legal situation regarding the employment of refugees. This might have a negative impact on the willingness of companies to recruit refugees instead of national applicants.
- Economic forecasts in Europe are not optimistic for the coming years. In phases of economic distress organisations do lack the time and motivation to deal with additional topics like refugee employment.
- Many companies do feel that they do not get enough public support to navigate the administrative procedure when it comes to employing refugees.

They rather report that public authorities are sometimes obstructing their efforts.

Opportunities for the COME IN approach

External conditions can also present opportunities for implementation. The project team was able to identify such opportunities that can give your COME IN training implementation some tailwind.

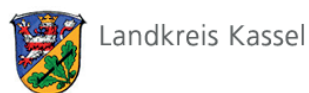
- Many European states have announced their willingness to continue to receive refugees in the future. As long as refugees find their way to Europe and are given shelter here, there is a need to integrate this group not only into our society but also into the European labour market. Therefore, there will continue to be a need for support services for companies in this endeavour.
- European labour markets face numerous challenges such as increasing numbers of vacancies in some sectors, skill shortage, ageing workforce or lack of motivated apprentices. In these circumstances, refugees represent an important resource of human capital and COME IN can increase enterprises knowledge, skills and attitudes to exploit the wealth of talents refugees bring to Europe.
- The employment and successful integration of refugees at the workplace can be used strategically by companies in their CSR strategies to reinforce their ethic values.

7. Closing words

The Implementation Strategy can be described as one of the core products of the COME IN project because it links all important outputs to each other and provides access to them. With this text we would like to ensure that COME IN remains visible and useful beyond the duration of the project. Our goal is to have a positive influence on European companies and in a broader sense also on society.

For that great purpose, we need your help. Only together with you we can achieve substantial changes in order to use the so-called refugee crises for a mutual European benefit. The first step has been taken. Now it is up to you to continue and to build on the knowledge gained. This Implementation Strategy helps you to design and implement new versions of COME IN by yourself.

The COME IN Project Consortium wishes you every possible success in your efforts towards building a world of diversity and welcoming culture!



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