

Migration and local authorities – impact on jobs and working conditions

by

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The Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU) investigates the impact of privatisation and liberalisation on public services, with a specific focus on water, energy, waste management, health and social care sectors. Other research topics include the function and structure of public services, the strategies of multinational companies and influence of international finance institutions on public services. PSIRU is based in the Business Faculty, University of Greenwich, London, UK. Researchers: Prof. Steve Thomas, Dr. Jane Lethbridge (Director), Emanuele Lobina, Prof. David Hall, Dr. Jeff Powell, Sandra Van Niekerk, Dr. Yuliya Yurchenko

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Executive Summary

Although since 2014, the EU has increased its responsibilities for migration policies with the crisis in 2015, the Member States have started to exert control over migration at national level. Just as there has been tension between EU migration policies and national level policies, there is growing evidence that local authorities are taking a more proactive position to define local policies for third country nationals. In some countries, these complement stronger positive national policies, in other countries, where there is an absence of national migration policies, local authorities are playing an important role in supporting the integration of third country nationals within society and the local economy. They do this through social cohesion activities, language education and wider education and life-long learning services. The position of third country nationals in the labour force is often weak, especially women and those with low levels of education. There is a need for more focused strategies to make the recognition of existing qualifications easier and quicker. Third country nationals do not form a large part of either local authority or public sector workforces. In a period of growing labour shortages, this problem will have to be addressed through faster recognition of qualifications and training, mentoring and networking initiatives. Austerity policies have had an impact on third country nationals because they have resulted in cuts to services, e.g. social cohesion, which were specially targeted at third country nationals. The effect of the global economic crisis has also disproportionately affected the employment of third country nationals, thus slowing their integration into the labour market. Public sector workers responsible for services for third country nationals have experienced cuts in budgets, more difficult working conditions and a lack of training, which has made it more difficult to deliver adequate public services.

Recommendations to local authorities:

- Recognise the important role that third country nationals can play in the local economy and society;
- Encourage principles of diversity and equality in all local / municipal policies supported by systems of accountability;
- Help third country nationals to take part in democratic processes, e.g. advocate the right to vote;
- Target initiatives to multiple social groups, e.g. entrepreneurship training for both young entrepreneurs and third country national entrepreneurs, poverty reduction to low income groups including migrant groups;
- Provide information and services in multiple languages;
- Put equal opportunities/ diversity recruitment policies in place and monitor them annually;
- Create public procurement policies that encourage third country national businesses and third country national friendly businesses;
- Set targets and collect data to monitor and evaluate programmes - share this information with third country national organisations.

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Introduction

This report was commissioned to inform a workshop held on 27 January 2016, on migration and local authority services within Europe, with a special focus on **Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Italy and the UK**. This final report includes the presentations and discussions which took place at the workshop on 27 January 2016.

This report addressed the following research questions:

- What is the current EU situation in relation to migration policies and what is their potential effect on local / regional government?
- What is the role of local authorities in the management of migration
- How have austerity policies affected migrants?
- How are migrant workers integrated into municipal workplaces?
- What are the barriers to inter-mobility between public sectors in different countries?
- What role can local authorities play in integrating migrants into the community?
- What is the impact of austerity on working conditions in local administrations processing work and residency permits
- What are local authority practices with refugees /asylum-seekers?

Definitions

- **Asylum seeker** - someone fleeing persecution or conflict and seeking international protection under the 1951 Refugee Convention on the Status of Refugees.
- A **refugee** is an asylum seeker whose claim has been approved.
- An **economic migrant** has left their country in search of improving their economic position.¹

All three groups are often described as migrants but not all migrants are refugees or asylum seekers. The term 'third country national' has been used in this report to refer to asylum seekers, refugees and economic migrants.

Current EU situation in relation to migration policies

Migration policies within the EU are fragmented. The EU2020 strategy acknowledges the importance of labour migration to address labour shortages. It has been estimated that 66 million labour migrants will be needed by 2020. Germany will have a shortage of 2.4 million workers. Other countries, such as France, Italy and the UK will experience labour shortages after 2020. There is a more ambiguous approach to recognising the human and social rights of migrants. Since 2014, the Commission has had responsibility for migration policies covering legal migration, illegal migration, borders, visas, a Common European Asylum System. These consist of policies to:

- Address asylum by ensuring EU legislation is uniformly applied at Member state level by the development of the Common European Asylum System
- Support legal migration and integration to EU states which meet labour market demands and integrating third country nationals
- Enable the return of migrants which combats irregular migration

- Promote solidarity between Member states so that those most affected by migration can be supported across the EU through, for example, an Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund which supports Member states in managing migration flows. ²

Although there is now clearer EU level responsibility for migration policies, there are strong political pressures at Member state level to impose national migration policies. For example, Estonia, Hungary and Romania have all published migration policies since 2014.³ The UNHCR critique of the Hungarian Strategy reported that “The vision that the integration capacity of municipalities should be examined is not translated into objectives”, an indication that municipal involvement in migration policies in Hungary had not been implemented. ⁴

Diagram 1: Main illegal border crossing routes 2015



This political pressure become more acute in 2015, as a result of political and economic crises in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, which has resulted in a large increase in the number of migrants trying to enter Europe. The EU has been unable to respond to this crisis in a coordinated way which has resulted in member states developing their own migration policies, informally opting out of the Schengen agreement, with diverse responses from countries across Europe. This is putting pressures on government administrations at federal/ central, regional and local levels, particularly the regions which have the largest number of irregular border crossings. These include the Eastern Mediterranean, Central Mediterranean, Western Balkans, Western Mediterranean route, Western Africa, Eastern Borders routes and Apulia and Calabria (Diagram 1 CEMR REPORT). By the end of August 2015, 548,595 asylum applications had been made to 10 countries in Europe (Table 1). The total number of applications made in 2014 was 571,000.

Table 1: Number of asylum applications made in the period January – August 2015

Country	Number of asylum applications January - August 2015
Germany	245,675
Hungary	98,070
Sweden	48,725
France	32,155
Italy	30,535
Austria	28,310
Belgium	20,870
Switzerland	19,620
UK	14,990
Netherlands	9,735
	548,595

Source: Eurostat in Bew Research Center (2015) Fact-Tank News in Numbers

There have been changes in the demographic structure of migrants. Previously the majority were single men but 2015 has seen a large increase in the number of families with children, who have more complex needs. One of the immediate effects of the increase in the number of migrants is the increased costs of receiving such large numbers of people but integrated approaches are needed at local, regional, national levels. The practical strategies required to deal with these large numbers need to include housing, education, health and other related services, most of which are the responsibility of local authorities.. The quicker that migrants are integrated, then the sooner they become self-sufficient, employed and pay taxes.⁵

Two new Implementation Packages were adopted on 13 May 2015, which contained legislative proposals, budgetary measures and action plans. The first implementation package on 27th May 2015 included provisions for the relocation of 40,000 migrants from Italy and Greece, the resettlement of 20,000 per member state and a public consultation on the future of the Blue Card (for highly skilled migrants). The second implementation package in September 2015 set up 'hotspots' in Greece and Italy to ensure the registration and support for migrants. It accelerated the agreement relocation scheme to ease pressure on Italy and Greece and agreed the stronger use of provision to return asylum seeker to safe third countries. The second implementation package also included provision for stronger border controls and supporting the needs of the most vulnerable migrants and refugees, especially children. In addition, there are EU funds which are made available to a range of stakeholders including state and federal authorities, local public bodies, non-governmental organisations, humanitarian organisations, private and public law companies and education and research organisations.⁶ The European Social Fund (ESF) has €21 billion for social inclusion. The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) is a source of funds for social integration for regions experiencing depopulation or specific skills needs (Dorota Ptak-Kroustalis, DG Migration and Home Affairs).

The role of local authorities in managing migration – policy and practice

As the previous section has shown, there are tensions between migration policies at EU level and Member State level. In considering the role of local authorities in the policy and practice of migration, there is a similar tension between national migration policies and regional/ local authorities. Local and regional authorities have important roles to play in facilitating integration policies for migrant populations because of their responsibilities for social and community cohesion. Local authorities have “*strategic and tactic advantages over national authorities*”, which include mobilising groups of migrants not just individuals and engaging with majority organisations e.g. trade unions, churches, employers’ organisations. All these groups can be mobilised at local level.⁷ Local authorities also have the some policy influence over housing, social policy, health and education. They can contribute to training for labour market integration and education through language and civic training. A positive form of policy implementation would be for national authorities to frame integration policies but leave scope for local authorities to implement, however, the trend in Europe is for the opposite to happen.⁸

Local/ municipal / regional authorities are rarely solely responsible for immigration policies and this can make their role in managing migration difficult. However there is evidence that some municipalities in Europe are beginning to formulate local integration policies either as part of the process of implementation of national policies or as a reaction to their absence at national/ central government levels. In a study of decentralising integration policies, Penninx (2009) looked at the development of local integration policies, from both ‘bottom up’ and ‘top down’ approaches.⁹ In Sweden and the Netherlands, national policies have stimulated local authorities to develop their own integration policies. In Switzerland, some cities, such as Zurich, Berne and Basel, have developed integration policies in the absence of national policies. Other European cities have realised that they need more cohesive and consistent integration policies.

Schmidtke & Zaslove (2014) examined how two European regions, Emilia-Romagna (Italy) and North-Rhine-Westphalia (Germany), developed regional level migration and integration policies in two countries which have different national immigration policies.¹⁰ Both Germany and Italy show how migration can emerge as a political priority. In the case of Germany, immigration was not a political issue until the 1980s. Italy was a country of emigration until the 1990s.

Germany

In 2000 a citizenship law, in place for over a 100 years, was revised. In 2002, the Enquete-Kommission highlighted that the successful representation of migrants’ interests was key to effective integration. Although integration summits took place in 2006 and 2008, which provided a forum for debating between different levels of government and civil society groups, there was little presence of grass roots organisations.¹¹

North-Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) took a proactive approach to developing its own integration policy, which took place under both Social Democratic and Christian Democrat governments. Overall, the aim is to retain migrants through a series of initiatives, for example, language training for pre-school children, improving access to the labour market and education. New legislation, entitled the Participation and Integration Law (*Teilhabe und Integrationsgesetz*) aims to create entitlements for immigrants.¹²

Italy

Although the first immigration law was introduced in 1986, the most important law in relation to local authorities and local policy making was the Turco-Napolitano Law (40/98) which controlled work permits, family unification and permanent residency. It also created a National Fund for Migration Policies and funds were used to develop regional integration policies. This marked the beginning of the decentralisation of immigration policies. National government is responsible for border controls, asylum and citizenship but integration is the responsibility of regional governments. Although national governments have passed legislation which has made it more difficult to obtain a work permit and easier to expel illegal immigrants (2002) and a 2008 law, which criminalised illegal immigrations and made marriage and family reunification more difficult, the regional competences for integration has remained intact. Decentralization procedures have delegated the renewal of residence permits to municipalities, which together work with local public services for increasing access to education and learning, work, housing and local administration. ¹³

Although Emilia-Romagna had some limited provision for immigrant services (social assistance, housing and social disadvantage) after the 1998 Turco-Napolitano Law, more funds were transferred to the region, which were used to develop annual programmes for immigrants. The regional government began to formulate legislation to support migrants' rights (2004 *Norme per l'integrazione sociale del cittadini stranieri immigrati – Law for social integration of immigrants*). The focus has been on language training, cultural mediation, legal rights and channels for representation. The centre-left government has worked in partnership with civil society organisations. ¹⁴

The goals of the 2004 law complemented a left political agenda, which aimed to increase participation of immigrants in public life, prevent discrimination, make monetary provision for provinces and municipalities, facilitate access to housing and social services and support cultural integration especially in schools. Inter-culturalism was chosen over multi-culturalism because it was considered to avoid ghettoization and helps to provide knowledge, resources and abilities for immigrants and Italians to communicate. The concern of regional and local governments, of both left and right-wing, is more influenced by the need to manage issues in local communities and the socio-economic needs of regions rather than turning immigration into a polarising political issue. ¹⁵

In other European countries, local authorities work to implement integration measures at local level. In Austria, provincial governments set annual quotas for residential titles and municipalities and district commissions implement integration measures at local level. In Spain, regional authorities and autonomous regions cooperate over migration policies. In Sweden, county councils and municipalities cooperate on immigration policies. Norway has tried to strengthen links between central and local government to support municipal districts with high rates of low income families with poor housing. In the Netherlands, holders of residence permits are entitled to accommodation in a municipality of their choice as well as training, social security benefits, study grants and family unification. This arrangement places local authorities at the centre of the resettlement process. ¹⁶

This section has shown how regional and local authorities are often used by national governments to implement immigration policies. In countries where national immigration policies are either not well formulated or hostile to re-settlement, local authorities have taken initiatives to develop migration policies which are not necessarily a reflection of national policies.

Local authority integration practices

Although the migration crisis in 2015 has highlighted the importance of local authorities supporting the integration of third country nationals, in some countries local authorities have been involved in many initiatives over the last few decades. In this sense, there is much that can be learned about the crucial role that local authorities play in integrating third country nationals. This section will outline the type of activities which play a crucial role in integration, giving examples of effective projects. In addition, more recent responses that local authorities have made in 2015 will also be outlined.

A (2015) Eurofound report 'Challenges of policy coordination for third-country nationals'¹⁷ found that although there was a move towards more restrictive approaches to admission and integration policies, the links between integration and migration policies were becoming stronger. Citizen based policies, with an emphasis on social cohesion, participation and inclusion were mostly driven from local levels.

Local authority actions that play an important part in the integration of third country nationals fall into two main areas:

1. Civic education and language courses, education and life-long learning - promoting intercultural models and social cohesion initiatives – at different ages and levels;
2. Integration into local labour market and encouraging entrepreneurship.

Civic education and language courses, education and life-long learning - promoting intercultural models and social cohesion initiatives

Italy

The region of Umbria, Italy, has the second highest number of third country nationals in Italy. There has been a recent change in attitude by third country nationals who no longer see Umbria as a place to pass through but choose to remain there. Umbria, like several other Italian regions, had passed its own legislation to support the social integration of third country nationals (Regional Law for the Social Integration of third-country nationalism 18/1990). Umbria has been working to promote an intercultural model of integration, inclusion and social coherence through a variety of measures. Although irregular immigration is considered illegal and a criminal offence in Italy, the Italian Constitutional Court recently affirmed that fundamental rights (in particular health and education) are for all, independent of citizenship status.¹⁸

In Umbria, there are annual programmes for social affairs, health, schools, culture, labour, housing, operating as cross cutting sectoral actions. Agreements have been developed with associations, stakeholders and social bodies on strategic initiatives. Funding has been provided for local authorities and other civic society organisations to implement specific projects or actions. Agreements have been drawn up with the Minister of Labour and Social Solidarity to promote and sustain the knowledge of Italian language, civic principles and culture among immigrants. An EU project which provides European Funds for Integration for third-country nationals has been created.¹⁹

In Norway, national government has developed integration policies which include implementation by municipalities. All public sector agencies have to ensure that public services are equally accessible for migrants. The main role of the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (part of Min of Children, Quality and Social Inclusion) is to coordinate with municipalities and other public sector agencies, immigrant organisations and private sector organisations.²⁰

Sweden

Sweden has a high level of integration of third country nationals. There is a close relationship between central and local government. Migrants are housed initially in accommodation centres in either Stockholm, Gotenburg and Malmo and other municipalities where accommodation has been available.²¹ In 2013-24, as part of integration work with municipalities, €21 million was invested in urban neighbourhoods for municipalities which were experiencing high levels of exclusion. A performance-based support grant is paid to municipalities which improve school results, raise local employment rates, and reduce dependency on welfare benefits.²² In March 2016 new legislation will be introduced which will make it a statutory responsibility for municipalities to provide accommodation for refugees.²³

Spain

In Madrid, Spain, local authorities have worked with migrant organisations to develop links with the communities that the third country nationals come from. This approach links local integration of communities to wider transnational cooperation. It also contributes to addressing some of the causes of migration through promoting development in the third country. In the longer term it is seen as a way of controlling and managing migration. Many of the local authorities in Madrid have worked with Latin America communities.²⁴

In contrast, Bilbao, where the number of third country national has increased recently, has adopted an “intercultural city strategy and an intercultural action plan”.²⁵ A local strategy aims to increase integration and managing diversity within the city, based on an overall goal of inter-culturalism. The Local Action plan draws stakeholders together through different activities, for example, training, networking, employment, housing and education. Bilbao, with the Spanish government and NGOs has organised a network of institutional collaboration to meet asylum seekers who are to be resettled from other European countries.²⁶

United Kingdom (UK)

The central government's February 2012 integration strategy assigns greater responsibility for integration to society and local authorities. The national policies and funding to support this process focus on five key factors: common values, mutual commitments and obligations, social mobility, local civic participation and tackling intolerance and extremism. While local and regional authorities are taking a lead in certain issues and parts of the UK (e.g. London, Scotland, Northern Ireland), they may not have the data (apart from the census), guidance, resources, migrant forums or willingness to respond effectively to newcomers and reverse inequalities for long-settled communities.

An example of some of the dynamics between UK central and local government in relation to immigration policies can be seen in the work of local authorities with children of migrants who do not have any access to public funds. A recent study looked at how local authorities in England have approached the provision of the 1989 Children Act which “requires local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children ‘in need’, within their families, including a child whose parents whose parents have ‘no recourse to public funds (NRPF)’”.²⁷ The practice of local authorities in meeting these requirements varies across the country. Some give greater priority to the needs of the children while others focus on the immigration status and credibility of the parents. Over 3,391 families were supported in 2012/13, a rise of 19% on the previous year. However, the level of support provided by local authorities is basic. Accommodation is provided but in Bed and Breakfast hotels or private rented accommodation which is often unsuitable for children. Subsistence payments are very low, lower than levels for other groups, including refused asylum seekers. A large percentage of families had pending applications to remain in the UK and the majority were found to be

entitled to remain in the UK. Local authorities are having to provide a safety net for families excluded by central government immigration policies.²⁸

Ireland

Like Italy, Ireland is a country which has changed from being a country of emigration to one of immigration. The city of Dublin launched a City Wide Integration Framework in 2008 which brought together stakeholders to make integration central to policies and services rather than setting up separate services for third country nationals. This Framework presents the economic and social advantages that third country nationals can bring to the city. The impact of the global financial crisis on Ireland has led to the cutting of national funding for local integration initiatives. Local authorities are now expected to put integration into local development plans. Dublin City Council set up a Public Participation Network which provides opportunities for local groups to influence and contribute to decision-making bodies in the Council, particularly migrant community groups.²⁹

An initiative which transcends national boundaries is the project 'Mediterranean City to City – Migration Profiles and Dialogue' set up by United Cities and Local Government (UCLG), the International Centre for Migration and Policy Development (ICMPD) and UN Habitat. Initially creating a network of North African cities, it will be extended to southern Europe. Many migrants from West Africa are settling in North Africa as part of their journey to Europe but there is a lack of public policies to provide services for this new group of migrants. The aim of the network is to improve migration governance to ensure rights to the city and rights of citizens, through dialogue, sharing knowledge and action. The project has convened a set of seminars and peer-to-peer meetings and is developing a City Toolkit which will help cities integrate migration issues into local planning (Lamine Abbad, UCLG).

Some of the debates at the workshop on 27th January 2016 highlighted the importance of language. This debate was informed by an account by Loveleen Brenna of how migration and diversity were the new 'normal' and that a new language was needed to define it. The terms 'inter-culturalism' and 'multi-culturalism' were discussed and some participants felt that rather than polarise the debates into either 'inter-culturalism' (focus on 3rd country nationals strengthening their communications with local people) or 'multi-culturalism' (promotion of several different cultural traditions within a locality, so that all are accepted), there were elements of both approaches that needed to be brought together. Similarly the differences between integration and inclusion needed to become part of a dialogue between civil society actors and local government. Terms like 'belonging', recognising others as unique, and respecting people as equal were given. This was part of creating a new society which gave equal respect to 3rd country nationals and to local residents (Loveleen Brenna).

Integration of third country nationals into local labour markets

Europe has predicted labour market shortages by 2020. Many local and regional authorities are aware of the pressures on the local labour market and its role in economic development. One of the most significant strategies that local authorities can pursue is to support the integration of migrants into the local labour market. Once migrants can earn their living and start to pay taxes, they are able to make a contribution to society and the economy. However, there are some barriers and challenges which local authorities will have to overcome. The lack of data on employees with a 3rd country background makes it difficult to identify problems and monitor progress. Although the EU indicator set (Zaragoza indicators), agreed by Member States in 2010, aims to collect and use information about migrant integration, it is only slowly becoming established. There is often a lack of a clear vision of what employment in local authorities and cities could contribute to a wider integration strategy. There is often a low level of staff awareness of the benefits of a diverse workforce.

Labour market statistics show that there are significant differences between third country nationals, intra-EU migrants and nationals in terms of economic activity rates, unemployment rates, temporary work contracts and over-qualification rates (Table 2). The activity rates for Intra-EU migrants is higher than for either third country nationals or for the reporting country, which is reflected in economic activity rates of both women and men.³⁰ Unemployment rates among third country nationals are higher than among the reporting country population. Similarly, a higher percentage of third country nationals have temporary work permits than either intra-EU migrants or national citizens.

Table 2: Activity rates, unemployment rates and temporary work permits in Europe

Activity rates	Activity rates		Unemployment rates		Temporary work permits
	Men	Women	2012 All	Young people	
Third country nationals	80%	57%	21.3%	35%	24%
Intra-EU migrants	85%	71%	12.2%	23%	18%
Reporting country	78%	66%	9.8%	14%	13%

Source: OECD Working Paper No 159 Dec 10th 2012 pp.15-17

It is not just a lack of language skills and education that affects the position of third country migrants in the labour market. The lack of recognition of the qualifications is a major barrier that affects their progress in the labour market. Table 3 shows that 39% of foreign citizens are over-qualified for their employment/ jobs compared with 31% of intra-EU citizens and 19% of national citizens. There is also a difference in the over-qualification rate of third country citizens when divided into countries of origin with high and medium/ low development index. Third country citizens from countries with medium/low development index have even higher levels of over-qualification.

Table 3: Over-qualification rate in Europe

Over-qualification rate	2012
Foreign citizens	39%
Intra-EU citizens	31%
Third country citizens	38% (high human development index) 53% (low/medium development index)
National citizens	19%

Source: OECD Working Paper No 159 Dec 10th 2012 p. 17

Table 4: Lack of integration into labour market at country level

Country	Integration into labour market
Austria	Around 1/3 of working-age non-EU citizens are not in employment, education or training. Levels are relatively high for low-educated men and high for both low- and high-educated women. All non-EU migrant workers do not have the same opportunities for education, training or study grants as Austrian/EU citizens.
Belgium	Around 1/2 of working-age non-EU citizens are not in employment, education or training, according to 2011/2 estimates. Those not in employment, education or training include nearly 3/4 of low-educated women, 1/2 of high-educated women and of low-educated men and around 1/4 of high-educated men. This high level reflects the situation of non-EU newcomers and of the few long-settled but not yet naturalised as Belgium citizens
Germany	Around 1/3 of working-age non-EU citizens are not in employment, education or training in DE, which is average for Europe. These rates are 2 times as high for women than men and 3 times as high for the low- than the high-educated
Hungary	37% of working-age non-EU citizens are not in employment, education or training, which is 1/4 of men and 1/2 of women
Italy	1/3 of working-age non-EU citizens are not in employment, education or training. Women are 2.5 times as likely to be in this situation than men - one of the largest gender gaps in Europe. Only 15-20% of high- or low-educated men are not in employment, education or training, whereas this rate rises to 1/3 to 1/2 of high- or low-educated women.
United Kingdom	It is estimated 1/4 of working-age non-EU citizens are not in employment, education or training in UK. Levels are higher among high-educated women (27%) than among men (just 7%) and much higher among low-educated women (60%) than among men (28%).

Source: Migration Integration Index (2011 figures) www.mipex.eu

The differences between activity rates, unemployment rates, temporary contracts and over-qualifications point to a need for action to integrate migrants into the local labour market. The relatively low rates of third country nationals not in employment, education or training for the six countries listed show the need for support in entering the labour market and local authorities have an important role to play in this process.

There are several examples of initiatives which have tried to bring together social partners and other key players to support 3rd country nationals in securing local employment and training. In Sweden, the Fast Track project has introduced a faster process for introducing newly arrived refugees to the labour market. Refugees are often highly qualified and the Swedish Employment Agency tries to map out their skills and experience. Industries with labour shortages, for example, pharmacies, tourism, health and medical work, health and social care, are supported to provide jobs. The Swedish Public Employment Agency enters into negotiations with social partners in these industries. A long-term perspective is needed in order to create a system which supports both employers and employees. A recent collaboration with the Ministry of Health has identified migrant workers with skills and experience who will be targeted for future training and language courses. The number of applicants to the 'Fast Track' programme has doubled. Networks are being set up which help new arrivals to establish their own networks. Academics also help with teaching and training of refugees (Malin Looberger. SKL; Anders Jonsson, Kommunal)

In Barcelona, Spain, the Immigrants mutual support association (*Associacio d'Ayuda Mutua d'Immigrants a Catalunya* (AMIC-CGT) is part of the Immigrants, Foreigners and Refugees Support Service (SAIER) of Barcelona City Council. Although it is a municipal service, workers belong to different branches, which deal with different issues, e.g. employment and training, social services, legal issues, residence and work-permit card processing and language. The main aim of AMIC is to help third country nationals to have their country of origin qualifications recognized in Spain which will enable them to work in Spain. This can also lead to occupational training for potentially highly skilled workers. In addition, 3rd country nationals are given information about education and training courses, training centres and access requirements. Unemployed third country nationals with low or medium level qualifications are provided with opportunities to requalify and access other occupations because they may have limited Information and Communications Technology (ICT) skills and weak language skills.³¹

Migrants are supported in looking for work through information and tools. Migrants are given about 45 minutes of one to one interviews to provide information and guidance. This will include a skills gap analysis and recognition of needs. The services user and counsellor then build a learning pathway to strengthen the professional profile. Alternatively the services user may describe their background and the counsellor will explain the Spanish educational system and the opportunities provided. UMIC also cooperates with other integration services. Staff working in this services are all graduates and have specialist skills/ expertise, knowledge, for example, immigration, inter-cultural education, social policy, cultural mediation, public administration, social work, sociology of immigration.³²

The success of this AMIC-CGT project depends on ignoring the legal status of the people who seek help. All service users are treated equally. All agencies involved in working with 3rd country nationals must attempt to treat service users with respect and not impose judgements about their lack of status or qualifications. This is an example of successful cooperation between social partners and local government. It shows that local actors can make a difference even when working outside their areas of formal competence, especially where higher levels of government have failed to address the problems. Cooperation with the city council has helped to formalize the status of the services and to improve its legitimacy towards users and other public actors (Anna Ludwinek, EuroFound).

The education department of the city of Malmo, Sweden has run a Centre for Validation of Occupational Skills since 2000. This provides support for third country national who do not have documental evidence of qualifications/ skills. With a recognition of their skills, third country nationals do not have to repeat formal learning of their existing skills but continue with learning Swedish and securing a job. Service users are 'mapped' with a counsellor. They then contact the Validation Centre, which identifies their skills and assesses their level of competence. Other integration programmes, for example, language teaching and the establishment of internships, contribute to the process of supporting the third country national into the labour market. Staff working in this Centre have backgrounds as guidance counsellors and other skilled crafts. They do not have multi-cultural training but are trained as tutors.³³

Impact of austerity on working conditions in local administrations processing work and residency permits

The EUROMED (2012) survey of public service workers and their work with migrant users of services found that there had been a gradual deterioration of services with increasingly difficult working conditions, especially in initial reception services, where there was a lack of

equipment and inappropriate premises. Public service workers were not receiving adequate training and information which made it more difficult to deliver public services.

Workers at a reception centre in the Bobigny prefecture Paris region, which had 1200-1600 users each day, reported that they were set quotas that were impossible to meet. There was lack of mediators for departments which deal with applications for naturalisation, asylum and other services. There was only a two day training on immigration policy and foreigners' rights. Offices are inadequate, with no heating and no windows. There was a high turnover of staff and high rates of sick leave. Workers were instructed not to talk to Arabic speakers in Arabic although they were allowed to speak English. As a result of these poor working conditions, service users received inadequate and often incorrect information which caused delays with applications. These inadequate services combined with long queues of service users resulted in aggressive behaviour towards public service workers.³⁴

In Spain and Portugal, public service workers reported that the quality of public services had deteriorated. Efficiency was measured quantitatively rather than focusing on quality. They also reported a lack of training and information, a lack of inter-cultural mediators and interpreters. Relations with management had deteriorated, with an increase in worker-management conflicts. Workers felt that their work was being undermined, their skills were no longer valued and a climate of mistrust was fostered by management.³⁵

Both these examples show that there is a lack of training and adequate resources for public service workers responsible for migration policies. The effect of austerity has been to reduce the resources available for these services as well as adopting approaches to service delivery which emphasize quantity over quality. These changes have affected the ability of workers to do their jobs and the relationships between migrants and public service workers.

In contrast, in Venice, where services report directly to the police, better working conditions were recorded. Cultural mediators and interpreters were obligatory, which resulted in an improved service. There was an emphasis on the "transmission of knowledge and skills between colleagues". Public service workers had also campaigned to keep their offices in an historic building because "foreigners also have the right to something beautiful".

How have austerity policies affected migrants?

The global financial crisis had an immediate effect on the employment and unemployment of third country nationals. In Greece, Slovenia and Italy, third country nationals were disproportionately affected by unemployment. Although the employment rate for migrants increased the unemployment rate for migrants remained unchanged.³⁶ The poverty rate for third country nationals in Greece, Poland, Spain and Slovenia has increased by more than 10 percentage points.³⁷ In-work poverty had increased by 5% points in Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, Estonia and Slovenia. Austria, Belgium, France, Norway and Finland had also experienced increases but of less than 5 percentage points. Denmark, Germany, Netherland and Hungary experienced a reduction in in-work poverty rates but in-work poverty rates were twice as high for third country nationals with low levels of education than more higher educated migrants.³⁸ Many third country nationals work in sectors that have been disproportionately affected by the recession, e.g. catering and construction.³⁹ This poses particular problems for local authorities attempting to integrate migrants into the local labour market.

Austerity has affected many of the basic services which local authorities provide for third country nationals. In the Netherlands, the cuts to funding for social integration have been dramatic. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Integration has had a 80% cut in its

budget for integration of third country national. Resources for language and orientation courses will drop to a tenth of their budget between 2010-2015.⁴⁰

By contrast, Portugal, a country strongly affected by the global financial crisis, has maintained levels of funding for integration of third country nationals. The budget for the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue increased after 2010. It included new measures such as making third country national eligible for basic literacy training offered to the beneficiaries of Social Insertion Income, establishment of an Immigrant Entrepreneur programme and mentor programme and ensuring social assistance for third country nationals living in extreme poverty whatever their residence status.⁴¹ In 2015, the National Association of Local Authorities worked with the National Migration and Frontier Service in drawing up a Memorandum of Understanding to implement a National Action Plan.⁴²

In Spain, also affected by the global economic crisis, there were reductions to the Spanish Integration Fund, which was distributed to municipalities and regions. Support for health and education funding increased which reduced the size of cuts to the integration budget.

In the UK, extensive cuts to public funding after 2010 were made, including the budget of the Department of Communities and Local Government. This has affected local authority budgets and local public services. Language programmes for third country nationals were cut and eligibility defined much more narrowly, with an emphasis on third country nationals paying their own fees. NGOs which support third country national integration policies have had their grants cut. Legal aid has been cut, which has affected third country nationals.⁴³

The gradual deterioration of public services is affecting the experience of migrants in the process of applying for asylum and other welfare rights. Migration policy, social policy and access to decent employment should be seen as inter-related. Third country nationals are needed by many European countries to become part of the workforce, especially health and social care.

How are migrant workers integrated into municipal workplaces?

A EuroFound/ Cities for Local Integration Policy (CLIP) report (2007) found that there were few migrants employed in public administrations. It estimated that only 1.9% of non-nationals work in public administration and defence in the EU (15). This joint Eurofound / CLIP report identified diversity policies in employment and service provision, including out-sourced contracts, and subsequent monitoring and evaluation of these policies as all contributing to integration of third country nationals into the local labour market. In addition, establishing consultation and collaboration activities with local stakeholders and setting up complaints procedures, racial harassment policies also contributed to this process. However, these policies often take time to have an effect. A 2015 EuroFound report found that there were still legal and procedural restrictions on the recruitment of 3rd country nationals in public administration and public services.⁴⁴

The city of Amsterdam has over 50 years experience of working with third country nationals and has developed many successful integration policies. However, there have still been difficulties in integrating third country nationals into the municipal workforce. In 2007, when there was a limited workforce available, it was still difficult to increase the proportion of third country nationals into municipal organisations without extensive positive action and a multi-cultural approach.⁴⁵

The Migration Integration Policy Index provides details of policies in place at country level which help to increase the numbers of third country nationals in local authority/ public sector

jobs. Table 5 shows the position of third country nationals within the public sector in eight countries.

Table 5: Employment in public sector

Country	Position within public sector	Measures
Austria	Non-EU citizens cannot equally access jobs in the public sector	
Belgium	Public sector (regional, local, federal) accounts for about 20% share of jobs in Belgium and they have to become citizens for equal access to public sector jobs, both for permanent jobs and some temporary ones.	
Germany	Qualified newcomers who cannot contribute to the public sector unless for 'urgent official needs'	Wir Sind Bund' campaign offers federal public sector apprenticeships in 130 occupations, including the aim to improve cultural diversity and a welcoming culture Several länder also want a more representative public sector by reaching out to people with a migrant background (e.g. Berlin needs you!)
Hungary	The public sector can only hire long-term residents.	
Italy	Legal non-EU workers and their families are allowed to find jobs in the general labour market, with all its strengths and weaknesses, but without policies recognising or developing their professional skills. Targeted policies are weak both to formally recognise their foreign qualifications and skills and to develop their professional skills, networks and work experience.	
UK	Non-EU residents are generally treated the same as UK citizens, as the UK does not close off sectors of the economy to immigrants.	

In the majority of countries, third country nationals form a very small percentage of the public sector workforce. Although some local authorities have had equal opportunity and diversity employment policies in place for several years, the impact on new appointments takes a long time to be felt. Combined with the complexity of getting qualifications recognised (Table 6), third country nationals find it difficult to get appointed to public sector posts. However, although the public sector employs relatively few third country nationals, there are growing

labour shortages in parts of the public sector, e.g. social care/ health sectors. More needs to be done to improve access to the procedures for recognising qualifications.

Table 6: Recognition of qualifications

Country	Recognition of qualifications	Measures
Austria	As of 2014, all non-EU citizens do not have the right to a procedure recognising their foreign diplomas or professional skills but there are several initiatives which are based on bi-lateral agreements	The 52/2012 Amendment of the Federal law on Universities shortened the procedure for recognition of academic diplomas from 6-to-3m and reorganised the one-stop-shop and qualification recognition through NARIC (National Agency for the Recognition and comparison of International Qualifications and skills) followed by a new information website (www.berufsanerkennung.at), a campaign and network of regional competence and advisory centres (www.anlaufstelle-erkennung.at). However, the procedure is based on bi-lateral agreements and carried out by universities and the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy.
Belgium	Across the country, new third country nationals can get basic information on how to recognise their foreign diplomas, e.g. www.mydiploma.be	The French community is setting up a 'socio-professional orientation'. The Flemish community's public employment service is supposed to provide a specific advice and work-related language courses (e.g. JobClubs) and to a one-stop-shop (NARIC Flanders) for the recognition of most foreign diplomas.
Germany	Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act aimed to standardise the procedures and criteria, at least for professions regulated by federal law. Before procedures could be missing or complicated and time-consuming, requiring co-operation between länder and professional organisations. The Act was motivated by Germany's forecasted demographic changes and labour market shortages for skilled workers.	
Hungary	No single procedure exists to recognise non-EU academic and professional qualifications and skills	
Italy	Non-EU immigrants may not apply for a formal recognition of their foreign qualifications and skills. Procedures to recognise academic	Following European Law n. 97/2013, EU long-term residents, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection can work as civil servants (e.g. teacher or

	and professional qualifications are equal for long-term residents but not other non-EU citizens. Procedures to recognise professional skills are under-developed.	municipal employee) under the same conditions of EU citizens. This change was inspired by EU immigration directives. Previously, exceptions were only made in special cases. For civil service jobs, knowledge of the IT language is required. The only limitations for EU and these non-EU citizens are jobs exercising public authority and safeguarding public interests (e.g. policemen and judges).
UK	Skilled immigrants with foreign qualifications and skills can get them recognised by NARIC, the UK's long-established one-stop-shop since 1984 http://www.mipex.eu/what-is-mipex	Reduced bridging programmes for skilled immigrants (e.g. no more overseas trained teachers programme after 10 years' work)

Source: MIPEX www.mipex.eu

One example of a local authority-led initiative which shows how third country nationals can be helped into public sector employment is the City of Amiens Contract Commitment Diversity *Contrat engagement diversite* (CED) or fixed term job contract. The City of Amiens, the General Council of the Somme and Amiens University Medical Centre work in partnership to offer people subject to discrimination opportunities to train, qualify and seek employment. This group of three local organisations also work with other partners, e.g. National Centre for Local Administration, the public employment services, National Association for Adult Training, regional council and the state.

The *Contrat engagement diversite* (CED) is a fixed term job contract which aims to increase experience, skills and professional networks. The programme is aimed particularly at young people and targets third country nationals as well as ethnic minorities and people from other disadvantaged communities. Apart from the recognition of qualifications, local authorities have become involved in the creation of internships which provide third country nationals with work experience which helps their integration into the labour market as well as improving the integration into society. This initiative helps to provide a public network of skills, support and training, access to professionals, jobs and enterprises and good career development support. The contract creates a commitment between the host institution and the job seeker but also draws on access to other employment contracts, e.g. Apprenticeship contract, the access pathway to local authority careers.⁴⁶

The new EU Framework on Public Procurement includes social criteria and their use in collective agreements. More work needs to be done to look at how diversity is included at a local level in collective agreements. Example of good practice could be collected and made available to EPSU/CEMR networks.

Conclusion and recommendations

Regional and local governments are playing increasing roles in the creation and implementation of integration policies for third country nationals. In some countries, this is supported by strong policies from central/ federal government but in other countries, regional/ local authorities are taking initiatives of their own. With increasing experience, there is a growing awareness of what is required for third country nationals to become integrated in the local labour market and society. However, the process of integration into the local labour

market is slow. Third country nationals also form a very small percentage of public sector workers. Their position is weakened by the problems of getting qualifications recognised although there are a number of initiatives which are trying to speed this process. Both employers and employees can play a role in facilitating the integration of third country nationals into the labour market.

One of the conclusions of the workshop was that social partners in local and regional government will have to learn how to change the terms of the debate so that 3rd country nationals are not 'set against' local people. By 2020, many sectors in Europe will have severe shortages of labour unless attitudes towards employing 3rd country nationals change. Local authorities and other agencies will have to develop a narrative that provides a positive account of the benefits of migration for national labour markets combined with the importance of social inclusion. Local authorities have an essential role to play in enabling 3rd country nationals to become part of society through education, language support and facilitating their entry into the labour market.

Recommendations

- Recognise the important role that third country nationals can play in the local economy and society;
- Encourage principles of diversity and equality in all local / municipal policies supported by systems of accountability;
- Help third country nationals to take part in democratic processes, e.g. advocate the right to vote;
- Target initiatives to multiple social groups, e.g. entrepreneurship training for both young entrepreneurs and third country national entrepreneurs, poverty reduction to low income groups including migrant groups;
- Provide information and services in multiple languages;
- Put equal opportunities/ diversity recruitment policies in place and monitor them annually;
- Create public procurement policies that encourage third country national businesses and third country national friendly businesses;
- Set targets and collect data to monitor and evaluate programmes - share this information with third country national organisations.

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EPSU is the **European Federation of Public Service Unions**. It is the largest federation of the ETUC and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 263 trade unions; EPSU organises workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local, regional and central government, in all European countries including the EU's Eastern Neighborhood. EPSU is the recognized regional organization of Public Services International (PSI). For more information please go to: <http://www.epsu.org>



The **Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)** brings together more than 150 000 municipalities, cities and regions federated through 60 national associations from 41 European countries. It therefore constitutes the most representative association of local and regional governments in <http://www.ccre.org/Europe>

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- ² http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/asylum-migration-integration-fund/index_en.htm
- ³ Estonia Integrating Estonia 2020; Migration Strategy Hungary 2014-2020
- ⁴ UNHCR Comments on the Government's draft Migration Strategy (2014-2020) <http://www.unhcr-centraleurope.org/pdf/where-we-work/hungary/unhcr-comments-on-hungarys-draft-migration-strategy.html>
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