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Labour market integration of refugees: Different approaches in Europe

Klara Foti

Research Manager, Eurofound, Social Policies Unit

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Outline

- Introduction: aim of the research, its methodology, and challenges
- Structure of the report
- Country groups by the effects of the refugee crisis
- Large increases in asylum applications especially in 2015
- Social partners' involvement in the integration process

Structure of the report

Introduction

Policy context and key facts

Policy debates in Member States

Legislative changes and proposals on the reception and labour market access of asylum seekers

Factors facilitating and hindering labour market access

Role and involvement of social partners in the integration process

Conclusions

RESEARCH REPORT



Approaches to the labour market
integration of refugees and
asylum seekers



Country groups by the effects of the crisis

Key destination countries	Transit countries		Countries moderately affected	Countries hardly or not affected
	Highly affected	Affected		
AT	EL	BG	FR	CY
BE	IT	HU	IE	CZ
DE		HR	LU	EE
DK		SI	ES	LV
FI			UK	LT
NL				MT
NO				PL
SE				PT
				RO
				SK

Number of asylum applications in the key destination countries, 2014 and 2015

	2014	2015	Increase (%)
EU28	626,960	1,321,600	111
Austria	28,035	88,160	214
Belgium	22,710	44,660	97
Denmark	14,680	20,935	43
Finland	3,620	32,345	794
Germany	202,645	476,510*	135
Netherlands	24,495	44,970	84
Norway	11,415	31,110	173
Sweden	81,180	162,450	100

*According to national figures, the number of asylum seekers reached 890,000 in 2015 (BMI, 2016). This reflects the number of people registered in the German EASY system, which records those who intend to apply for asylum (IOM, 2016b)

Source: Eurostat

Social partners' involvement in the key destination countries – an overview

Country	Type of involvement	Thematic focus
Austria	Polycymaking	Education and apprenticeship Quick access Information provision
Belgium	Polycymaking	Quick access Support for self-employed
Denmark	Polycymaking	Traineeship scheme (IGU)
Finland	Polycymaking Provision of services	Apprenticeship Information provision Recruitment of refugees
Germany	Consultation and advice	Education and apprenticeships Information provision
Sweden	Polycymaking	Quick access (fast-track initiative)

Main issues on involvement of the social partners

- Positions of the social partners on labour market integration
- Level/intensity of their involvement
- Initiatives and examples where social partners cooperate or individually implement specific measures
- The reasons why social partners were not involved in initiatives (in cases they were not)

Some conclusions relating to the involvement of social partners

- The social partners play an active role in labour market integration of refugees and asylum seekers in most key destination countries. Focus is on apprenticeship, training, accelerating labour market access and recruitment of refugees
- Their involvement ranges from shaping policies at national level through consultation and advice, to direct provision of services and measures
- At sectoral level, those social partners appear particularly active, where there are labour shortages (examples of Sweden and Austria)
- Initiatives and activities of sectoral social partners could be instrumental in fighting against exploitation of migrants and promoting legalisation of their employment (for example in Italy)

Key findings – general conditions

- The **average duration of asylum procedures has increased** in many countries, in some quite substantially, and **much effort** has been made mainly in the key destination countries **to ease labour market access, or to accelerate the asylum procedure** for certain groups of asylum seekers
- If **status for protection for asylum seekers** is given, it is **often temporary – adverse affects** from a **labour market integration** perspective
- **Living conditions in reception centres** are often **inadequate** to prepare people for joining the labour market.: e.g. overcrowding; availability of externally provided services (health or education), and coordination with these services can be difficult
- **Cut-backs in non-employment-related services and allowances** – they could further impede labour market integration (adversely affecting living conditions); **Housing shortages** – proximity of jobs cannot be considered as a factor when assigning accommodation
- Due to delays in asylum procedure, **increased importance for measures facilitating labour market integration even during the asylum procedure**