



**Strategic Partnership in Adult  
Migrant Education: Perspectives  
from Mediterranean and Baltic Sea  
Regions**

# Recommendations for implementation of adult migrant integration programmes

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STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN ADULT MIGRANT EDUCATION:  
PERSPECTIVES FROM MEDITERRANEAN AND BALTIC SEA REGIONS (M E D B A L T)

The decades from 1990 to 2010 mark a period of intense international migration in Europe, which brought various challenges for national and international state policies and societies to deal with intercultural coexistence. At the same time as the western European countries began to critically evaluate their immigration and migrant integration policies, the newer EU member states confronted the challenges of creating migration regulations and strategies for migrant integration from scratch. As a consequence, the aim of the project *Strategic Partnership in Adult Migrant Education: Perspectives from Mediterranean and Baltic Sea Regions* is to prepare a set of recommendations for the adult migrants' education based on good practices implemented by each participating country.

**Objectives:** to prepare political recommendations on EU, national, local and the level of practitioners in the field of migrants' education for integration

**Activities:** To study the good practices in adult migrants' education; to prepare the education methodology for adult migrants; to make recommendations regarding the programmes and infrastructure for the integration of adult migrants; to present the results in a final project conference.

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## INTRODUCTION

According to the European Agenda on Migration<sup>1</sup>, one of the main priorities is to develop “a new policy on legal migration: in view of the future demographic challenges the EU is facing, the new policy needs to focus on attracting workers that the EU economy needs, particularly by facilitating entry and the recognition of qualifications”. Since it does not provide solutions for the more of one million refugees who entered the EU borders in 2015 or the previously arrived immigrant citizens, the EU is looking for a route to face the challenge of migrant education. EPALE Migrant Education Week<sup>2</sup> underlines the point claiming that “the current migration crisis has emphasised the vital role of adult education for the integration and skills development of migrants across the European Union”.

This package of recommendation seeks not only to tackle the issues regarding adult migrant integration through education, but also to provide the recommendations to implement related programmes on EU, national and NGO levels. All these layers of recommendations together with a section for practitioners are divided to the essentials parts of setting up measures and programmes, implementing and enforcing them, taking a look to a proper monitoring and evaluation together with lobbying and advocacy, while the section of practitioners focuses on the means and ways of organizing education.

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<sup>1</sup> For more, see [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication\\_on\\_the\\_european\\_agenda\\_on\\_migration\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> For more, see <https://ec.europa.eu/epale/node/20789>

## 1. EU LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In order to achieve success in the integration process, the development of a **common policy on migration** for all the European countries should be formulated on the EU level. While both national needs and the special circumstances of incoming flows of migrants have to be taken into account and play a role in deciding the further actions, there has to be a common ground for organising successful action to manage the challenges of adult migrant education within the context of migrant integration processes.
2. This common policy should also **define and fund research** on demographical, didactic and social inclusion projects at all levels. The member countries should converse with EU DGs responsible of the allocation of funds, Ministries, European and extra-European governments involved. The EU should inform each member state about the possible calls for funding, which would cover specific areas of intervention (with an emphasis on adult migrant education measures). All parts (governments, key stakeholders) should be informed in detail about the necessary requirements and the possible dates for submitting their proposals.
3. The EU level agreements are not limited by the common policy, but should also include the **common framework for adult migrants training**. There should be a common structure to prepare educational programmes and the evaluation of its results in order to formulate a common recognition system based on the skills acquired in different contexts. The programmes aimed at adult migrants should be sensitive to the differences among them and specific but rather usual circumstances, such as low skilled adult migrants and other vulnerable migrant groups (migrant women, refugees, etc.).
4. In order to keep the high level of quality, the suggestion is to base the common EU framework for adult migrant training on assessing the skills and needs in different integration phases: labour market and qualification recognition, access to education and health care, social services and job interviews. At the same time, it is necessary to provide key stakeholders, NGOs, employers and other actors with incentives to train their personnel to obtain specific skills.
5. The programmes designed within the common EU education framework should be based on **shared information and good practices** in education and training of adult migrants. The common data base of all EU programmes related

experiences should be created and made accessible for NGOs, associations of migrants, regional governments, city councils, etc. The exchange of experiences between countries at the initial phase of process of development of integration and education policy addressed to adult migrants, and those which already have long-term experience in this area is urgently needed and important.

6. The **evaluation on adult migrant education at the EU level should happen “on the spot”** and frequently within priority established EU evaluation strategy. The main criteria should include the impact of cultural and language learning, employability, social integration, also the data should be collected and used for further analysis on national levels.



## 2. NATIONAL LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

7. The role of national governments in providing adult migrant education policies and measures is crucial. Therefore, it is recommended that the **Governments allow NGOs and non-profit organizations enter the decision-making process** of the allocation of funds and rules of specific adult migrant education measures, so that the network among entities working on different training programme and associations of migrants, vocational schools and adult education centres can be created.
8. The governments cooperating with local non-governmental actors should develop a strategic plan based on the experiences of other countries, including best programs and practices recommended by the EU in order to avoid the repetition of courses and increase the efficiency of the programmes. The Governments should focus on making the integration policy as well as education activities addressed to adult migrants more decentralised as they are now and to include the local and regional level (authorities and institutions) to the process. **Cooperation** is vitally needed among all the actors of adult migrant education programme not only on the EU level, but also among governments at national level to assure better access to adult migrant education measures.
9. On the level of government, the measures to **increase professional training opportunities for adult education providers** should equally be taken into account in order to increase the quality of educational services offered. The Governments should organize mandatory courses in multicultural education for teachers and trainee teachers ending with compulsory education. Education programs prepared by the Government should be focused on sustainability, therefore, prolonging the duration of education.
10. At the initial phase of integration the **emphasis** should be **put on language courses** of the country, and in latter stage on the other education courses (adaptation, professional training, career counselling, etc.). Moreover, the latter courses should be provided in the official language of the country which is additional “push” element towards integration and decision to stay in the country (and not to move to other countries of the EU).
11. National agencies should **develop a network of local authorities and NGOs** that are working with migrants and evaluate the adequateness of each authority and NGO in working with migrants in order to legalize their activities.

National agencies should collaborate with the local authorities and NGOs in relation to migrants' needs in specific contexts and ask from these authorities and NGOs to suggest areas of intervention for the successful integration of migrants. National agencies should take into account organizations that have been established by migrants (e.g. migrant communities, associations etc.) and collaborate with them to get a clear view of their needs.

### 3. LOCAL LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

12. Since it has been mentioned that integration and education programmes should be decentralised emphasizing the local level, it is essential to **develop a regional plan** covering training, social inclusion, labour market integration and active citizenship. There should be an **intercultural mediator** who will communicate with both the migrant community and the local institutions will be able to clarify in detail which will be the benefits from their participation to educational programs.
13. Local authorities should be more engaged in integration activities together with NGOs (using the existing EU financing sources) what requires an improved **cooperation between local authorities and NGO sector**. That would also lead to exchanging information and best practices between different institutions in the same city and between different localizations. All the appropriate measures should be taken in order to assure that the services delivered to migrants are of good quality. In this regard there should be an external evaluator that will conduct regular visits to the educational premises in order to observe the learning process and conduct interviews that will ask all the people involved to tell their opinion.
14. The system of monitoring, evaluation and feedback should be created at local level between NGOs, education centres or professional vocational schools and local authorities.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

15. However, the strategies and actions to be developed at European, National or Regional levels are not that efficient without paying attention to **training of practitioners** and identifying needs, or without counting on a powerful supporting network of social, labour and education programmes properly linked and connected each other. It is extremely relevant to deal with instrumental knowledge, such as legal rules and basic language literacy, but also to start integration processes by inserting ethical, social and cultural values, in order to promote an intercultural climate for the wellbeing of both migrants and local citizens. Practitioners together with promoters should ensure **monitoring and feedback collection**, sketch suitable plan of action, communication strategies, promote the “culture of return”.
  
16. **NGOs and non-profit organizations** should have a role of **writing projects**, implemented in a responsible way from scratch until the end. NGOs and non-profit organizations have to create educational and training paths aiming at fostering the micro-entrepreneurship of migrants (especially women migrants to ensure gender-balance) in collaboration with trainers and professional-vocational centres. NGOs should coordinate with other practitioners and entities during all the stages of NGO actions: acceptance, training, social inclusion, job finding, etc. People working for NGOs are the actual people that **talk to migrants and know their needs**. They can discuss about the problems that they are facing and suggest possible solutions according to their experience.
  
17. **Adult Education Centres and Professional-vocational Schools** should provide **psychological help** for migrants when approaching them and informing them about the AVR measure, giving them orientation and educational path proposals. They have to know the needs of the communities living in their area and how to approach them explaining the importance of training and education in order to empower migrants and create synergies. It would be necessary to **involve teachers** specifically **trained to teach adults**. The approach used for teaching should take in consideration the background of the students and should be **highly participatory**, include consistent teaching materials, which allow the students to link the learning experience with everyday routine and working reality. Community learning might also be a useful instrument to motivate students in the learning process. A good solution is to engage migrants who participated earlier in education programs as “senior assistants”

or “group of support” as well as to combine formal and informal forms of education. Migrants usually are less interested in on-line courses in comparison with traditional (face-to-face) methods of learning

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to manage the flow of migrants with success, a common policy has to be created **on the EU level** taking into account the needs of each member country. There also has to be an agreement on common framework for adult migrants training that would function by sharing good practices. The evaluation has to happen “on the spot” collecting the data for further analysis. Cooperation between the current country of the migrant and his/her country of origin should be encouraged.

**National governments** should allow the non-governmental sector to enter the decision making, come up with a long-term plan and develop a network of local authorities and NGOs working with the case. Establishing a platform with information on ongoing projects would contribute to successful development and integration process. There also has to be a significant focus placed on communication, the visibility of migrants. The national governments should organize trainings for education providers focusing on language courses for the migrants as the primal step of integration.

**Local authorities** should work within a framework of regional plan with a help of an intercultural mediator communication between the migrant community and local institutions. The local regional plan should cover training, social inclusion, labour market integration and active citizenship. Exchange of information is also necessary on different localizations within the same city and cities of the region and external evaluators to directly talk to the migrants and observe the implementation of projects.

**Practitioners** should be provided with adequate trainings and ensure monitoring with feedback collection. **NGOs and non-profit organizations** have a role of writing projects and leading them through the whole process, also people working at the non-governmental sector are the ones to directly discuss the needs of migrants and discover the individual cases of people. **Adult Education Centres and Professional-vocational Schools** should provide psychological help, to empower migrants creating synergies between them and local community and to involve teachers trained for teaching adults who could create highly participatory classes linking learning experience with reality. A good solution is to engage migrants who participated earlier

in education programs as “senior assistants” or “group of support” as well as to combine formal and informal forms of education.

Successful integration through education of migrants is definitely a challenging task yet manageable if carried out with responsibility, effectiveness and accountability of each level of participating actors.