



Supporting Education and Labor Market Integration Of Migrants In The Health-care Sector

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Abstract

Aim: To present two projects connected to immigrants' education and employment. New View concentrates to teachers' needs in the level of methods in mixed classes. SIMIGRA aims to support migrants in their social and occupational integration process in respect to the need for care workers in the National Health Service, through the use of informative tools and online careers guidance.

Background: High number of vacant posts in the health sector in Hungary is unfilled. Reasons are the progressive obsolescence of active personnel and significant increase in the number of care professionals who emigrate abroad. These trends cause a structural shortage of staff, especially in nursing. Immigration in Hungary from the ethnically mixed populations in Hungary's bordering countries (such as Slovakia, Romania, Ukraine, etc.), with large Hungarian minorities can partly ease the shortage of staff. Challenges are given for teachers and for the National Health Service as well.

Methodology: Successful education in mixed classes postulates new methods in education. Identified needs have led to methodological tool-kit for teachers. A diversified range of online services therefore it has no territorial limits, concerning the migrant population in Hungary and the potential migrants who reside in neighbouring countries. The services facilitate migrants in access to information which aids their path of social and occupational integration.

Findings: New methods, Hidden social, administrative and professional issues.

Conclusion: Well prepared methodological tool-kit for teachers and supporting services for migrant professionals can ease successful integration on social and professional level to approach labour market and increase the quality of health services.

Today two main themes lie at the heart of the issue of national migration: the progressive contraction and ageing of the population and the presence of Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries. Following the peace treaties of the First World War, Hungary lost a considerable part of her territory and the population that lived there, and after the Second World War forced returns took place on a large scale. The main consequence of these unsettlements was, on one hand, an extremely homogenous Hungarian population from an ethnic point of view and on the other, ethnically mixed populations in Hungary's bordering countries (such as Slovakia, Romania, Ukraine, etc.), with large Hungarian minorities.

This large presence of ethnic minorities outside Hungarian borders still represents an essential source of immigration towards the country and at the same time has a decisive influence on national immigration policy. In the period between 1988 and 1991 the annual number of immigrants was between 23,000 and 37,000, almost 80% of these represented by 'Hungarian ethnics' from Romania, Ukraine and Yugoslavia. As well as the issue of asylum seekers, in the early Nineties the legislative and institutional framework that would regulate immigration and naturalisation was also defined. According to national statistics, immigration in Hungary has decreased since 2005. Among the principal countries of origin today is Romania, counting for almost half of all immigration, followed by Ukraine and the countries of former Yugoslavia.



In 2007, approximately 175,000 individuals were employed in the Hungarian National Health Service. Of these, doctors made up little more than a fifth (36,262 people), while another 98,109 people were employed in other care duties or other health fields (nurses - approx. 60,000-, obstetricians, physiotherapists, in-home assistants, dental technicians, etc.).

The 2008 data supplied by the Hungarian Central Institute of Statistics (KSH) shows an increased trend in the number of vacant posts in the health sector (4298 positions for paramedic staff, equal to 4.2% of the total availability, remain unfilled). This trend has caused a structural shortage of staff, especially in nursing, of 30-40%. A critical factor in this regard is, moreover, the progressive obsolescence of active personnel: a fifth of the personnel currently in service are approaching retirement, being over 51 years of age, while the generational turnover is only guaranteed to cover 50% (one new entrant for every two leaving for reasons of age).

These structural changes in the 'natural' balance of the workforce in the health sector are accompanied by a significant increase in the number of care professionals who decide to emigrate abroad in search of better wage and working conditions. With Hungary's entrance into the European Union a growing flow of health workers towards Western European countries has been registered. The most recent data indicates a progressive increase in health workers intending to emigrate, with acceleration in the nursing sector above all. According to official figures in 2008 1187, in 2009 1614 and in 2010 1777 Hungarian doctors and nurses requested their professional certificate in order to work abroad.

In partial compensation for such a migratory dynamic, a trend has been noted of foreign workers entering Hungary who already have qualifications in the health field or who are interested in working as doctors, nurses or social-health auxiliaries. On the basis of the data available for 2008 118, for 2009 67, for 2010 61 licenses were issued mainly to Romanian, Ukrainian and Slovakian citizens to operate in the health sector (doctors, nurses, dentists).

Institute for Basic and Continuing Education of Health Workers (ETI) has for some decades held a prominent role in the field of health training and continuing education in Hungary. The Institute has relationships and links with different partner institutions in other countries of the European Union and the world, with whom they exchange information on training, also with a view to participation in European initiatives.

One of European initiatives supported by the European Commission was New View project - Project title: Changing Methods in Teaching Migrants - in which the goals were developing new views and approaches how to handle the challenges whereby vocational trainings for professions within the field of health and social care are in focus. Researchers and experts from Austria, Denmark, Germany, Greece and Hungary are collaborating in the project that is coordinated by the Research Institute of the Red Cross, Austria.

Teachers are the main target group of NEW VIEW: They are facing different needs and specific demands in their classes like diverse educational background, language competences, learning styles and more subtle group dynamics on several levels. Thus, their teaching methods do not fit in the same way as before. Other pathways are not known or due to several reasons not taken; however, they are required though. Developing new pathways is also abetting course participants, especially migrants, who are confronted with several stresses attending a vocational training: environment, teaching style and materials might be new; studying in a different language than mother tongue may cause high efforts. Moreover, migrants often experience contempt of their competences and their accomplishments. This is especially happening in the context of language. Mistakes in speaking and writing are often interpreted as impression of less competence [1].

Special offers are very important though, but there are alternatives and NEW VIEW figures one: to adapt teaching methods to the needs of migrants. Sensitive teaching and considering the demands of course participants bring out the whole potential, improves cultural understanding and has even to this point an integrative aspect. The project aims were to explore the specific challenges faced by teachers who teach mixed groups (migrants and non-migrants), explore the challenges faced by course-



participants attending these courses, to adapt existing and develop new teaching methods to integrate the demand of intercultural education, to define methodical-didactical competences and skills which describe the required profile of teachers in multicultural adult education, to sensitise the vocational teaching community about the impact related to the issue of language. As a result, a "Tool-Kit" with useful methods for teaching heterogeneous groups has been developed and be available in Danish, German, Hungarian and in English[2].

Besides issues of education in respect to the scenario portrayed relating to the country's need for health workers and the migratory movements that concern this professional sector in particular, specific needs emerge which the other project called SIMIGRA aims to address. SIMIGRA supports by the Unicredit Foundation. The SIMIGRA project's goals are to facilitate migrants in access to information which aids their path of social and occupational integration, with reference to their main rights, to inform immigrant workers on how to have their qualifications recognized and on the professional requirements for the various jobs, to offer support to employers who intend to take on immigrant staff, to guarantee correct information on the possibilities offered in the Hungarian work market in the health field for potential migrants residing abroad, to arrange tools which promote the exchange of information and forums for migrants, along with careers guidance.

An Information Point will be opened at the headquarters of the Institute for Basic and Continuing Education of Health Workers in the centre of Budapest. The Information Point answers migrants' questions personally, by phone, by e-mail. The Project is built upon a diversified range of online services therefore it has no territorial limits, concerning the migrant population in Hungary, the potential migrants who reside in neighbouring countries. Nevertheless, given the high concentration of hospitals and other health institutions in the Budapest area, some services, such as those aimed at employers, will be supplied principally in the district of the capital. In the project the Institute creates and activates different e-learning materials in the topic of different issues like professional differences, the process and difficulties of naturalization and other official tasks. Besides e-learning materials, forum and chat for migrants also will be available on the website www.etitav.hu.

The NEW VIEW's "Tool-Kit" bases on the findings of interviews with managers, teachers and course participants and concretises the main challenges in vocational trainings for each particular interviewee group from their point of view. It is considered that in Hungary the rate of migrants in healthcare trainings is 5-15%. We do not find an appreciable difference concerning lingual skills and the norms between the migrant and non- migrant students. There were differences rather on the areas of the professional norms, habits and competences. The need for methods accelerating the closing up, helping the learning process are relevant concerning the Hungarian technical language, the English expressions and abbreviations, the usage of devices, protocols and standards. The SIMIGRA project aims to support migrants in their social and occupational integration process in respect to health professions in Hungary and to respond to the need for healthcare workers in the National Health Service, through the use of informative tools and careers guidance accessible online. The given answers by head-nurses for a questionnaire of migrants' employment also showed that services of the Information Point and the existence of informative materials are needed by employers as well to be able to work with a well prepared and informed immigrant staff.

References

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