

skills development for migrants and refugees

Report on the working
group “skills development”
within the framework
of the transnational
EQUAL partnership MEET

Meet
Migration - Employment -
Entrepreneurship / Training

InterCulturExpress
Förderung der beruflichen Chancen von MigrantInnen

migra
net
koordiniert von
Tür an Tür

ANET
ANET
ANET

visibilinvisibili

progress  TIGB

Imprint Impressum

Publisher Herausgeber:

Beratungszentrum für Migranten u.nd Migrantinnen
(Counselling centre for migrants)

Grüngasse 9/16, 1050 Vienna, Austria

www.migrant.at

Coordinating partner Inhaltliche Koordination:

InterCulturExpress

www.interculturexpress.at



Beratungszentrum
für Migranten und
Migrantinnen

InterCulturExpress
Förderung der beruflichen Chancen von Migrantinnen

Financial coordinating partner Finanzverantwortung:

InterCulturExpress

waff Programm Management GmbH

Vienna Employment Promotion Fund



Programm Management GmbH

Compilation Redaktion: Sonja Sari

Translation Übersetzung: Ida Černe

Proof reading Lektorat: Andrew Button, Jane Watts

Design Grafik: Toledo i Dertschei with mit Lena Artaker

Print Druck: REMAprint

Funded by

the European Social Fund

and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour

within the framework of the EQUAL common initiative programme


Gefördert aus Mitteln

des Europäischen Sozialfonds

und des Bundesministeriums für Wirtschaft und Arbeit

im Rahmen der europäischen Gemeinschaftsinitiative EQUAL





Thanks!

This booklet is dedicated to all the people who made this collective effort possible: the project leaders and their colleagues, the coordinators and transnational officers. We received great support and lots of input from colleagues from all five of the countries participating in the projects. It was not easy for all of us to communicate, but we listened to each other, laughed together and learned a lot along the way. We also developed skills: ours and those of others. For this wonderful experience, we are truly grateful. We are honoured to have worked with you all!

Special thanks goes to:

Elena Albert, Fiona Aldridge, Rainer Aliochin, Marjon Boelen, Simona Bonino, Markus Bottlang, Dave Brown, Anja Brunken, Andrew Button, Elaine Dixon, Jill Donovan, Felicitas Eitel, Ergül Ergün, David Forbes, Anne Güller-Frey, Robert Gray, Jasminka Grgic, Thomas Grübl, Deborah Hennessy, Loretta Hurley, Lovleen Khorana, Luca Marengo, Reiner Erben, Olcay Mintes, Jennie Mirfin, Dave Pickersgill, Susanne Praschak, Stephan Schiele, Paul Spoelstra, Ljaja Sterland, Wian Stienstra, Florian Schromm, Fabrizio Valabrega, Ingrid Veicht, Jane Watts, Ellen Wild-Blom, Sue Waddington, Massimiliano Kamal Yamine and Anthonio Oscar Zissou.

In addition, we would like to thank all the participants, the migrants and refugees who shared their experiences with us. We cannot name them all here, but without them these projects could not have been realized.

We are keeping our fingers crossed that the ideas in this booklet will fall on fertile ground and grow into new and productive projects.

Sincerely,

Ursula Morokutti, Verena Plutzar and Sonja Sari
InterCulturExpress, responsible coordinators for the working group
“skills development”



content

- 5 executive summary
- 7 the skills and needs of migrants and refugees
- 9 recommendations – working to rebuild careers
- 13 MEET – the partners
- 14 *Austria*
- 18 *Germany*
- 24 *Italy*
- 28 *Netherlands*
- 30 *United Kingdom*
- 38 the working group dynamics

executive summary
working to rebuild careers:
increasing awareness

This report is a collective look at the insights gained through national projects coordinated by an international working group designed to develop migrants' skills. Its goal is twofold: on the one hand, to raise public awareness of issues facing migrants and refugees in the labour market, and on the other, to help the migrants themselves to become more aware of what employment they are qualified for and how to approach the job market.

The intention was to increase general awareness of migrants' competences, since the European labour market needs their contribution because of skill shortages and an ageing population, but they are frequently excluded from appropriate employment opportunities.

There are no simple solutions to developing the skills of migrants and refugees, but a favourable political climate helps determine clear goals. Transforming these into reality requires great flexibility and innovation. The qualifications and skills of migrants can be better appreciated and applied if they are dealt with in a supportive environment. New methods of teaching languages are emerging, which take into account the occupational communication skills and technical terms required for each individual job. This means providing solutions to suit specific needs, such as tailor-made courses, including "learning by doing". But it is not just a matter of learning, but of connecting with the working world and a new culture. In this respect, positive role models can be very effective in "translating skills" and social competences, and provide a "human bridge" into a new world. There is a demand for more networking, which can lead to knowledge of self-help strategies, information, guidance and growing confidence in a world that does not always appreciate diversity. The goal should not only be to promote integration, but also to demonstrate cultural and religious sensitivity throughout the process.

The five Development Partnerships (DPs) from Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom, met in working groups, first in Turin, Italy in October 2005, then in Groningen in March 2006, in order to develop specific projects aimed at increasing migrants' awareness of what skills are required for different jobs and assisting them in gaining skills which should enable them to enter the labour market. The last meeting was held in Leicester in the UK in October 2006, and dealt with the results and recommendations.

The efforts to map out the qualifications and job skills of migrants and incorporate them into effective projects, with the aim of utilising and enhancing their knowledge, proved to be a complex endeavour, but one that yielded many helpful insights.

the skills and needs of migrants and refugees

Migrants and refugees have special skills and needs. Highly qualified migrants, in particular, have trouble verifying their education certificates or qualifications and making use of their competences and skills. Fully utilising their experience and potential requires tailor-made solutions (e.g. a modular education system, lifelong learning opportunities, and perspectives on reality.) It is essential that they have information about the labour market and job opportunities. They need to know the language and be able to engage in social interactions within a workplace.

The common goal of the five DPs was to implement specific projects to enhance conscious skills useful on the job. These projects aimed to facilitate the development of personal skills, intercultural competences, self-directed learning and language skills. In addition, this process has facilitated an awareness of other relevant transferable skills and



Participant of Antenna, InterCulturExpress, Austria
Foto: Jürg Christandl

the development of additional social and personal skills leading to improved confidence and adaptation.

Without language, other skills are sometimes useless, therefore job-oriented language courses are part of many of the projects.

Participants are made aware of what is actually required for a particular job. They familiarise themselves with the education system and the labour market. They learn about the key competences, including processing knowledge, social competence, and self-competence. This in turn builds up self-confidence and leads to greater motivation. In the process of learning these skills, the language skills of the participant also improve automatically.

Another very important goal is attaining skills to help find jobs. Career planning requires knowledge about the labour market and how to pursue job opportunities. This includes being able to present oneself on the labour market, responding independently to a vacancy, learning to network and integrating into society.

Learning skills useful for daily life helps migrants to give shape to their routine and activities and to make choices about their short- and long-term priorities. In order to participate fully in their new world they need knowledge about everything: from rules, values and norms to making political decisions.

The labour market in particular demands special social skills such as being loyal to colleagues and one's employer; being able to cope with changes; being able to be critical in a positive way; to follow instructions; to work independently and to overview and organise work.

recommendations – working to rebuild careers

1. No simple solutions

Developing migrants' skills and having their qualifications recognised is a complicated process. It is multifaceted and very specific to each country and situation. There are no universal guidelines, no overall solutions. One thing is clear, however: lots of factors have to come together for it to work. The content of the programmes and the methods used have to fit together to reach realistic goals.

2. A favourable political climate

The connections between political will and financing have to be in place, not only locally, but also at regional and European Union levels as well. Developing skills takes time and this is not always a priority in government policies, which set up models forcing migrants to take any job rather than the job for which they are qualified. The time is often just not there for training "better skilled" workers. Similarly, opportunities to develop skills are few. Students are often not entitled to benefits, and courses can be very expensive and may conflict with budgetary limitations and government priorities.

3. Determine clear goals

The short-term goals often outweigh the long-term advantage of appropriate jobs being taken by people with appropriate qualifications. Therefore, a main recommendation would be to identify the skills needed, that is, determine the correlation between job market demand and the supply of a qualified work force. It is to the advantage of society and the individual to focus on a clear long-term utilisation of the skills migrants already possess, instead of just filling low-skilled jobs in the short term.

4. Flexibility and innovation

But above all, even if there are no simple solutions, two of the most important ingredients are flexibility and innovation. This should come in the form of support from the top, leading to the formulation of clear and workable policies, effective networks, and funding for training and paid work. The next step is to upgrade people with qualifications who have fallen by the wayside, by giving them that extra training or a new perspective, or showing them the "do's and don't's" which will lead them to a job for which they are suited and contribute to the overall productivity of society. New, more effective links are required with employers to facilitate work experience and work placement opportunities and to promote networks and positive images.

5. Provide a supportive environment

This support involves opportunities for developing appropriate basic skills in language, literacy skills, and social “behaviour”. It also means offering assistance in obtaining work permits, finding available jobs, setting up advice centres for migrants and refugees with libraries and childcare facilities. All this should be combined with committed migrants whose financial situations are stable. This entails a need for language teachers and social workers, instructors and employment advisers who motivate and share their knowledge about labour markets and migrants’ cultures. It is crucial to have willing and helpful advisors who can provide counselling on the spot. A supportive environment with a comprehensive approach can help migrants to set achievable goals for developing their study and social skills. In addition, this can lead to migrant self-organisation and the establishment of self-help groups.

6. Recognize qualifications and appreciate skills

The long and difficult road to the recognition of qualifications gained in one’s country of origin is often a stumbling block to professional success and better placement for migrants. It is important to encourage people to consider their other abilities in addition to academic qualifications, and for this to have equal value. One should be careful not to specialise people at all costs, limiting them to very narrow channels of work. Instead, as early as possible, they should be empowered with a wide range of skills which can open doors to diverse professions. It is important to highlight skills and create a positive image by explaining skills and giving details, encouraging people to talk about their skills and showing them how to find jobs through networking. This should increase the effectiveness of getting and retaining employment. There is a need for courses targeting people with limited skills to help them develop a “cocktail” of skills including social skills (the accreditation of social skills, portfolio building), voluntary work, and placements. Overcoming prejudice is also a goal, since there is an acceptance of migrants originating from certain countries and a weariness of those coming from others. These prejudices are often very hard to break through.

7. Develop new methods of teaching the language

New and effective language training combined with vocational needs should be provided to enable migrants to absorb not only the actual language but also the communication skills and technical terms they require for their specific jobs. There must be a strong link between

vocational and language tutors. Some other tools are online exchange of language partnerships, methods of workshops, e-learning and blended learning. Long-term language learning is more effective and the courses should be more action orientated.

8. Provide positive role models

The “success stories” of integration – the people who have “worked their way up” in the system – need to be held up as examples. These are people to look up to, but also people with the same background and who can inspire trust in others. They are the ones that can point out the differences from an insider’s point of view. This can take place in “match meetings” where migrants are matched with mentors from their own professional field. It is also important to advocate role models for supporting others and showcasing skills, and to use volunteers from the same country to boost initial “translating skills”. These “cultural translators” should not only have roles as participants but as trainers, advisers, and project leaders; positions where they can advocate the special interests of minorities and develop and carry out their ideas. Training migrants for these positions should be a priority. Migrants who have found their niche and are at ease in society know the expectations of both groups and are better able to bridge the gaps between the cultures.

9. Networking

There is a demand for more networking, contacts with employers and further mentoring. The main problem is that employers are sceptical of qualifications obtained outside their country and they expect local experience, which they feel they can trust more than degrees that might or might not have been recognised. The migrants are also at a loss here. This is also partially due to the fact that there is a great lack of awareness of the rules of the labour market and the ways in which migrants can help themselves. The solutions lie in suitable work experience placements and voluntary work, as well as in increasing knowledge of self-help strategies, information and guidance, and improving awareness of networks and the benefits of networking.

10. Provide solutions to suit specific needs

Since there are no simple solutions, the projects must suit the needs of refugees and migrants in the job market. This demands tailor-made language learning, with courses dealing with coping with daily life. It is advantageous to combine vocational training with language courses.



“Learning by doing” seems to produce good results, as do skills audits in groups, whereby language improvement is a by-product. Improving communication skills, self-confidence, and building a framework between quality and quantity all leads to better evaluations and assessment of the migrant and a greater chance of success in the labour market.

11. Appreciate diversity

It is very important to recognise and understand social skills and deal with them on a multicultural level. The intercultural aspect should become the norm and conditions created where diversity can be accepted and appreciated. The goal should be not only to promote integration, but also to demonstrate cultural and religious sensitivity in the process.

the partners

1

The EQUAL Programme is a European Social Fund initiative designed to encourage the 'free movement of good ideas' between Member States, through transnational co-operation, which promotes new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities within the labour market. Development Partnerships work together in transnational networks.

EQUAL is for:

People who are working or seeking work who are subject to discrimination and inequality in the labour market. Policy makers and practitioners seeking better ways of delivering services for the above groups

Aims of EQUAL:

- Identify and address policy gaps
- New approaches / methodologies
- New training / support activities
- New networks / communication channels
- New Research
- Awareness Raising
- Help to combat social exclusion

Being in an unfamiliar country and confronted with a foreign language can be overwhelming, confusing and exasperating. Migrants face many obstacles, not only in social settings, but at work as well. To develop their skills they often need a helping hand. Many agencies and organizations have been set up to support them, but in this booklet we would like to introduce you to a new approach: MEET – a partnership of projects working to improve access to the labour market for migrants and refugees. The MEET (Migrants-Employment-Empowerment-Training) transnational partnership is a collaboration of five EQUAL¹ Development Partnerships (DPs) from the Netherlands (Laat zien wat je kunt!), Italy, (Visibili-Invisibili), Germany (MigraNet), Austria (InterCulturExpress) and the UK (Progress GP).

In working groups, the five DPs came up with projects to meet shared objectives and develop, exchange, and access new measures to further employability, qualifications and skills development for migrants. They presented new vocational courses, orientation and advice services including e-learning tools, ways to access the labour market and facilitate social inclusion and life-long learning opportunities. A website (www.meetequal.org) served as a network.

To understand the dynamics of MEET, in its day-to-day functioning, we must first briefly describe each of the partners, the climate in which they operate and their specific projects.

The objective of InterCulturExpress (ICE) was to promote migrants' labour market entry, career progression and job changes. It helped migrants make proper use of their vocational training or their educational qualifications. They gained more rapid access to occupations appropriate to their training. The DP compiled inventories of migrants' qualifications, while increasing general awareness of the human resources represented by migrants. The projects were located in the city of Vienna.

The goal of the development partnership was to make use of qualifications brought in by migrants and to further the professional opportunities of migrants who already had recognised education or work experience in their country of origin. They were provided with tangible offers to improve their position on the labour market. The people targeted had either been trained in a profession in their country of origin, had been able to adequately verify their diplomas in Vienna, or planned on getting qualifications and entering a career. The main focus was on supporting the professional mobility of migrants in the job market. Making the qualifications more transparent led to quicker entry to the corresponding profession.

The services of ICE took into consideration the special concerns of the multilingual status and background of migrants and did not just focus on the target group but on the many aspects, co-workers with professional adult education, mentoring and businesses. ICE wanted to reach the target group quickly in order to prevent the deterioration process of their qualifications.

Background In Austria newcomers (migrants) are obliged to take a German language course, which also includes familiarisation with Austrian culture. The migrants pay half the costs and have to pass the course if they want to have their residence permit extended. Refugees can also voluntarily take a language course. The Austrian Ministry finances their participation.

After this course there are very few opportunities for promoting development. For example, no structural help is provided to job seekers or highly qualified people who want to have their degrees recognised. In fact, “newcomers” experience restrictions when entering the Austrian labour market. Austria also has a large group of “old-comers”. Many of these former “guest workers”, as they

were called, have chosen to stay in Austria and bring over their families, while others return to their country of origin after retirement. In many ways the situation for migrants in Austria is quite similar to that in Germany.

Leuchtturm
(Lighthouse)

Contact: Verena Plutzar
Organisation: *Verein Projekt Integrationshaus*
v.plutzar@integrationshaus.at

prepared 16 participants for job market entry in November 2006, after a one year course. Lighthouse promoted migrants' career development by offering a one-year course to become a trainer/ adviser for vocational orientation with a special focus on the needs of migrants. Lighthouse participants completed the course after 1140 hours. Its goal was to develop special skills:

- methods of teaching and advising
- intercultural competence and communication and aspects of migration
- career orientation, education and further training and active job searching
- teaching and learning in two languages
- basic computer skills – business principles
- principles of law – project management
- gender and diversity – professional ethics
- internships and project analysis – supervising and support, coaching
- quality management and solution oriented work

In the group itself there were 25 languages spoken and the participants had experiences in 80 different professions.

Through their education and knowledge, the participants brought in a combination of experiences not present in any other training. By reflecting on their experience as migrants they were in a position to bridge the gap between the cultures in the fields of vocational training and job placement.

So much has happened after only eight months of the project Leuchturn. We have learned a lot during this time. Each participant is trying to break out of the difficult and depressing situation of being unemployed by taking this course (Leuchturn), to increase his/her chances of finally landing a job. The association Integration House is busy connecting migrants with opportunities on the job market, and familiarising them with professional vocational training processes. They are supporting them in their career integration in Austria.

Since almost half of all people looking for jobs are migrants, it is safe to say that a trainer or advisor of migrant background, who is comfortable in both worlds and knowledgeable about career orientation and counselling, can be much more effective and sensitive to the needs of his or her fellow people.

Latif, a participant of Leuchturn

Participants of Lighthouse, InterCulturExpress, Austria



BIMM
(Labour market integration and mentoring for female migrants)

Contact: Ursula Morokutti
Organisation: *abz.austria* (employment, education and future for women)
ursula.morokutti@abzaustria.at

provided vocational training, language courses, advice or counselling systems for job-seeking female migrants with a legal access to the labour market.

A special course was designed to provide women with essential skills and assist them in a job search meeting their qualifications. There was a special focus on cross-cultural competence. Although migrant women have a lot of skills to bring to the labour market, the problems of entering the Austrian job market are often a great obstacle. This course provided tutorials, self-directed learning and individual coaching. It established a cross-cultural mentoring programme for the participants, with 24 participants on two courses with ten mentors.

Participants of BIMM, InterCultureExpress, Austria



Ponte offered and developed basic computers skills in the form of e-learning. Supervised self-learning phases enabled further independent learning even after the end of the course. The course also offered vocational counselling. The goal of Ponte was to widen opportunities in the labour market. After achieving the basic qualification the participants were assisted in finding internships lasting about two weeks. There were 24 participants on two courses.

Contact: Susanne Prashak
Organisation: *verein hebebühne* (lifting platform)
susanne.prashak@hebebühne.at

Antenne was a job-oriented language course with the goal of heightening the language skills of participants. The course emphasised motivation for self-oriented learning. Learning material was tailored to suit the needs of workers in the metalworking and electrical sectors. A CD with this material was produced. The course was attended by 24 participants.

Contact: Thomas Grübl
Organisation: *Berufsausbildungszentrum (BAZ) des Berufsförderungsinstituts (bfi) Wien* (Centre for Professional Training of the bfi Vienna)
bfipaedag.baz@bfi-wien.or.at

2

A migrant is a person living in a different country than the one he/she originated from and has the citizenship of his/her birth country.

Migration background is a more general term to describe a person living in a different country from the one he/she was born in, who has either the citizenship of the new country, or the one of origin. The descendants of these migrants also have a migration background.

The aim of this project was to improve the opportunities for people with migration backgrounds² in the labour market and to reduce their barriers in gaining access to jobs. It dealt with all sections of the migrant community: descendants of migrants, foreign-born migrants with German citizenship, emigrants from Eastern Europe with German citizenship or their descendants, and refugees with residence permits.

MigraNet provided links between the job market and the migrant workforce, and improved the existing support structures. MigraNet found new channels for counselling, promoted vocational training, and developed profiling tools and competence – based occupational assessment – instruments. Structures of support were organised which provided advice to businesses and counselling and service personnel. The projects were located in Augsburg, München, Nürnberg and Potsdam.

Background In Germany there is a compulsory civic integration course. The emphasis is on German language and German culture.

Beyond this course, there are very few opportunities to progress. The big problem is the high number of unemployed migrants/refugees living in Germany. The current policy is aimed at migrants/refugees now entering Germany, but is inadequate since the existing integration problem still remains the same. Nor is there a structural plan to get integration started. At the moment, most support comes from initiatives started by employers and professional organisations.

XeneX
Contact: Rainer Aliochin, Ulla Krämer
Organisation: *Ausbildungsring Nürnberg*
aauev@t-online.de
ulla.kraemer@aauev.de

With integration now as the accepted national policy citizens with a migrant background are not only seeking employment but are striving to or already have set up their own businesses. Interpretation of German customs, traditions and education in the business world has been neglected in the past. XeneX is unique in its role in closing the information and cultural gap. It offers advice and counselling to entrepreneurs as well as established firms and businesses with migrant backgrounds. The project activities focus on following fields: how to set up a business, training programs to promote existing firms and enterprises, utilizing intercultural abilities in firms and institutions. Another focal point of XeneX has been the development of counselling and qualification tools. Examples of the various activities include:

- native speakers assist in the drafting of a business concept and its application
- individual support when applying for public funds/loans
- individual coaching enables participants to qualify for certificates required for craftspersons etc. by the Chamber of Commerce and similar institutions
- controlling tools developed for firms and enterprises with migrant backgrounds
- special support for women entrepreneurs
- communication information to institutions such as the Chamber of Commerce on the economic and legal contexts in the countries migrants come from
- promotion of self-help networks
- founding the multi-ethnic character of consultancies

Participants in a project of Migranet, Germany



SK



talent: natural ability to be very good in something

expertise: well skilled in something

versed: outdated word for being knowledgeable in a subject

capability: potential to have the ability

ability: being able to do something

Neigung

Fähigkeiten

Erfahrung

Talent

Kwalificatie

Kwaliteiten

Talenten

Houding

Competentie

Vaardigheden

Skills

competence: task specific ability

aptitude: feeling for something, natural ability to do something

qualification: measurable skill

knowledge: have the understanding to do something

well-read: knowledgable in a subject

Kenntnisse

Handlungskompetenz

Eignung

Fertigkeiten

Capacita

Attitudine

Abilita

Competenza espressa sul lavoro

Talento

Conoscenza

Chance M

Contact: Markus Bottlang, Brigitte Eisele
 Organisation: *Handwerkskammer für Schwaben*
 (Chamber of Crafts for Schwaben)
 mbottlang@hwk-schwaben.de
 brigitte.eisele@hwk-schwaben.de

offered vocational training, language courses, advice and counselling systems for migrants and people with migration backgrounds.

In particular, it dealt with consulting for founders of new businesses, developing vocational training and education for integration into the labour market, increasing awareness of the opportunities open to migrants and their potential, enhancing the awareness of the Chamber of Crafts towards the target group of approximately 135 beneficiaries.

EmpowerMi

Contact: Ellen Wild-Blom, Inga Paul
 Organisation: *Tür an Tür – Integrationsprojekte GmbH*
 ellen.wild-blom@tuerantuer.de
 inga.paul@tuerantuer.de

offered occupational advice, orientation and coaching for migrants over 25 years of age. Counsellors made use of the skills audit “Kompetenzbilanz für Migranten und Migrantinnen”, an important “empowerment” tool. In cooperation with PP ProMigraNet they developed and tested a new standardised competence-based instrument on occupational assessment. They offered training for advice and service staff on the use of the skills audit “Kompetenzbilanz” and the new instrument. They built up networking with employers, strategic partners and other relevant organisations to reduce the barriers that deny migrants access to the labour market.

EmpowerMi developed a pool of voluntary mentors, with experience in occupational orientation and other fields, to support migrants’ progression into learning and employment. They coordinated the development of concepts on vocational and linguistic qualification and coordinated and compiled a reference booklet for migrants.

I did a skills audit and was surprised to find I had so many skills and that my experience could also be applied in this country. It’s good to know that not only can I actually do something, but also that I am allowed to do it. While doing the skills audit my confidence grew as well as my trust in other people and society in general. This was the most important thing I learned in this project. Also the support of a mentor really helped me to take those extra steps and move on.

Female client of Russian origin

**Nachqualifizierung
(subsequent qualifications)
Nürnberg**

Contact: Florian Schromm, Anja Brunken
Organisation: *Handwerkskammer/ FBM in Nürnberg* (Chamber of Crafts in Nürnberg)
f.schromm.fbm@hwk-mittelfranken.de
a.brunken.fbm@hwk-mittelfranken.de

offered the subsequent qualification of migrant craftspeople (metalworkers, plumbers and hairdressers) with migration background. Participants were trained during a six-month period in order to improve their chances for employment and in the best-case scenario they received their final certificate of qualification. The project was conducted by coaches from three professions (a social worker, several teachers and several technical instructors) so that the participants obtained not only the instruction on know-how and expertise, but also the key qualifications or soft skills. Another focal point of this project was developing concepts for similar measures in the future. The networking process included the employment centre, the chamber of handicrafts, vocational schools and other institutions dealing with migrant issues.

**Munich Counselling for
Professional Qualifications
(MVHS)**

Contact: Jasminka Grgic
Organisation: *Münchner Volkshochschule*
jasminka.grgic@mvhs.de

offered and developed counselling concepts for specific migrant target groups. It took into account their gender, their situation, and their educational background. This project encompassed labour market specific and resource oriented aspects of counselling. It tried to reach a wide range of migrants, motivate them to participate in qualifying measures and improve their chances on the job market and ease social integration. The advice centre hosted information events, introduced the projects and did on-the-spot counselling. The emphasis was on competence awareness and building self-confidence. In addition, there were workshops called “The Road to My Profession.” Professional counsellors who worked with migrants were brought together through a network, so that they could exchange experiences. Counselling options were optimised. The project addressed the needs of unemployed migrants, or migrants at risk of becoming unemployed, as well as the communities in need of information about professional qualifications and measures. These in turn provided feedback on concepts and counselling models.

Male client of Iraqi origin

At first I felt like a small child in Germany. It was almost like learning to walk all over again, stumbling over the foreign culture and trying to make sense out of its bureaucracy. I had to learn the “right way” to talk and deal with people. Now I am much more conscious of the way I approach people: I am more diplomatic with them, but also more at ease, relaxed and not as impulsive.

As the name implies, the project addressed the “invisible” status of migrants by empowering them with “visible” skills and focusing on three aspects: counselling, social interaction and Italian language training combined with vocational needs. The project was located in the two provinces of Asti and Biella in the Piedmont Region. Here, as elsewhere in Italy, migrants face problems finding regular and stable jobs. Most of them are “first generation” migrants. The activities proposed in the project (training and counselling) were directly linked to improving their chances of gaining employment.

Background Permission to set up residence in Italy is only granted to migrants with jobs. An unemployed worker can only stay for six months (sometimes renewable) after his/her work permit expires. Many people reside illegally; most of them entered the country legally (with a tourist or student visa), but their legal justification for residence subsequently expired. The most common way for illegal migrants to obtain a visa is by trying to get a work permit within the framework of yearly quotas. Migrants and refugees have only recently started coming to Italy, so it is still a relatively new phenomenon. As a result, there is a lack of a coherent and well-established policy framework, especially when compared to other European countries. For example, there is no compulsory civic integration course and Italy has not yet developed a national strategy to co-ordinate integration programmes. The state has a very laissez-faire approach with a patchwork of local initiatives. Legal provisions regarding the rights attached to ‘constitutional’ asylum give refugees the same rights as Italians. Nevertheless, it is difficult to obtain “refugee” status. The life of asylum seekers is very difficult: for the first six months they are not allowed to have any formal authorisation to work in Italy and most of them cannot benefit from the Asylum National Program. Asylum seekers are protected from forced return and have the right to remain in Italy, even though they are not automatically granted a residence permit and have no benefits enabling them to survive financially.

Visibili-Invisibili

Contact: Simona Bonino, Elena Albert, Kamal Massimiliano Yamine
Organisation: *Consorzio Euroqualita* (CEQ)
info@visibilinvisibili.it

offered vocational guidance, Italian language training combined with vocational needs, advice and counselling for unemployed migrants. It tried to improve migrants’ self-confidence and implement a database with the migrants’ qualifications in order to match job supply and demand. All migrants who contacted the new bureaux located inside the Provincial Job Centres were assisted in improving

their job finding skills and in using public services. Sixty people participated in the courses, 600 sought job advice and counselling, and 1 000 obtained other information on living in Italy. Language courses were divided into two groups of migrants with different levels of Italian language skills and counselling needs. Besides language, relevant professional skills required in the area and citizenship education were also taught. All the participants were helped in writing a CV and in interview techniques.

We can illustrate the migrant situation and how skills can be developed in a particular setting by taking a closer look at Visibili-Invisibili in Italy.

Employees spend a lot of time at work, socialising, sharing time and goals with others. The extent to which an employee serves the professional needs of the company, depends not only on his/her skills and knowledge but also on knowing ‘how to be’, on a person’s capacity to cooperate, and on her/his social skills.

In Italy, migrants usually hear about jobs through “word of mouth”, and are brought in by someone they know who already works for the company. If this does not lead to a job, then people turn elsewhere. They seek help with difficulties and limitations that are only partially due to being a migrant. In such cases integration can be even more difficult.

Since the first hurdle on the way to a job is the interview with the employers – a client’s first encounter with Visibili-Invisibili was also an interview, an opportunity for the candidate to “practice” skills. The meeting was carried out in Italian and lasted about half an hour. The objective here was to highlight positive and negative aspects of the employee’s professional profile. The beneficiary should become aware of the kind of job to look for – and which technical and social competences he/she should enhance to fit the demands of the labour market.

The target group comprised three main types of clients: migrant men who arrived in a great wave between the 80s and 90s with non-elevated qualifications, adult and younger clients with higher qualifications, and migrant women. Migrant men have less difficulty in finding a job because they are less selective about the kind of work they accept.

From our experience here in Italy, people with a degree are often not comfortable with the job they have, since it doesn't take into account their qualifications. They feel a bit frustrated and are not content with their professional position here. They say they could do more and they want to try different ways of realising their potential. They are pessimistic. They say it's very difficult because it's hard for Italians with a degree, too.

A trainer, Visibili-Invisibili

They do not challenge themselves professionally, have low self-confidence, and are very reluctant to report any difficulties or unfairness on the job, believing it might endanger their status. These men have problems finding a job when they are fired or have not yet entered the labour market, or when they are too old for the non-qualified jobs available (for example, in the building trade). Because of the delocalisation of many industries more adult vocational programmes should be implemented and more economic resources should be invested. Of course, the native Italian non-skilled worker should also profit from this. Migrants, both men and women, with levels of qualification or diplomas that are not recognized in Italy either “undervalue” or “overvalue” themselves. On the other hand, those who are “better educated” and who have studied here, have high expectations, are self-confident and have more doors open to them. They want and expect good help and advice. These people have problems getting jobs that are scarcely connected with the knowing “how to be” or skills. While they express criticism similar to those of the Italian citizens looking for work, however, they also complain about institutions, bureaucracy and have limited opportunities for professional growth, and scarce jobs in many fields. It is not uncommon to see a person with a degree working on a production line in a factory or in the health care profession. Often they could aim for something higher, but lack self-confidence, or do jobs they do not enjoy and do not get around to having their qualifications recognised, as the process for verifying qualifications is a very difficult one. Generally they are confused and lack confidence. Often people who have been living here for a long time, due to their experience, effectively convince themselves that they only can do scarcely-qualified job, whereas those who have just arrived, at first do not see the need to have their diplomas certified or have their past work experiences formally recognised – all they feel they need to do is to adapt.



Participant of Visibili-Invisibili, Italy

Often, people with medium-level qualifications could aim for something more and, on the contrary, they are used to humble jobs just to get by, to survive, either because their diploma has not been recognised or because of some other reason... the root of the problem is that they have done different jobs and they do not know what they want to do, their possibilities remain unexpressed and they find it difficult to find a job, particularly in the Biella district... there was a woman with various qualifications, she had studied in Europe – management – and she found it difficult to move on and to realise her potential... generally there is confusion, linked to the fact that there is no confidence or because things went wrong once or twice... ...whereas for those who have lived here for only a short time, at the beginning they do not think to have their diplomas or past experiences recognised, putting it off till later, but the first need they have is simply to adapt themselves to the culture... in some cases people have prejudices, previous experiences, and they think they are losing time, these are the most difficult to convince to try to have their qualifications certified as a long term goal.

A trainer, Visibili-Invisibili

People with little or no professional experience, particularly women who have not been living in Italy for long, or who have not worked outside the home, seek help when facing a sudden entry into the job market. With these women it is difficult to foster relations because they are confused by the “outside” world. They find it difficult to communicate even if they speak Italian well. These women are very humble and disoriented; they are not able to look at career development as a path that needs building. Without experience, and influenced by information given by their compatriots and by word-of-mouth, which is often distorted, they find it difficult to get out from the ethnic frame of the labour market, according to which they should only be wives and mothers. They have low confidence in themselves and in those who try to “guide” them. They do not see the connection between learning and employment, which makes the job difficult for those trying to provide services to them. In many cases, like for the clients of the other segments, getting a job immediately is not an option, and the suggestion of language courses is often met with great reluctance: they claim they want to work and not to study. (Kamal Massimiliano Yamine, Fabrizio Valabrega, Visibili-Invisibili)

The context for skill development is defined by national circumstances, but on a local level the project “Laat Zien Wat Je Kunt” (literally: “Show What You Can Do”) based in Groningen, experimented with measures suitable for migrants. Migrants were expected to search pro-actively for job opportunities and attain the skills that lead to self-reliance.

The method of “learning by doing” highlighted job opportunities and increased the independence of migrants with advanced education.

Migrants, as members of society were not viewed as statistics. By taking their qualifications and resources seriously, they were given a face, integrated into the labour market and society; different but equal.

The direct results were less frustration and more independence among the targeted migrants, as well as finding the best approach to the job market. The indirect results were a more attractive workforce for local businesses, improved social circumstances in Groningen and increased knowledge among the partners in the DP.

Different methods were used to develop these skills. A very important issue here was how to validate the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL – EVC’ in Dutch) and how to find training which could bridge the gap between APL and the required level of education in the Netherlands. The three most important skills learned in the project were: how to find a job, how to participate in different social groups (building social networks), and how to be more social and be less alienated. Centres of vocational training, like Noorderpoortcollege and Alfa-college have a lot of experiences in working with migrants and developing skills for this group: e.g. APL, vocational training, dual training system, multicultural education, trainee workshops.

Background In the Netherlands migrants and refugees who are allowed to stay are obliged to take an integration course (“Inburgeringscursus”), which includes an exam, consisting of two parts: knowledge of Dutch society and Dutch language skills. Centres of vocational training, like Noorderpoortcollege and Alfa-college, have had an important role in providing this education.

Passing this test is a pre-requisite for obtaining authorisation to stay in the Netherlands. In the near future, a preliminary exam will be required abroad before migrants can even move to the Netherlands.

The current Dutch reintegration policy emphasises accepting any job at all costs. Due to this, highly skilled migrants are forced to accept jobs for which they are overqualified, when in fact, with a little more counselling, education and training, they could fill vacancies for highly-skilled jobs in the Netherlands.

Vocational training

Contact: Paul Spoelstra
Organisation: *City of Groningen* (CEQ)
p.spoelstra@sozawe.groningen.nl

was practical in nature and designed to be a ‘top-up’ on other initiatives run by the City of Groningen, funded by ESF (European Social Fund) or other subsidies. The training was custom-made to meet the needs of the target group.

On this course, I am not just expected to study from books and do tests, but to really demonstrate my qualities. I can choose the way in which I learn, and also the task I perform to show my abilities.

Hafiz, student, Laat Zien,
Noorderpoortcollege

Language courses

Contact: Paul Spoelstra
Organisation: *City of Groningen* (CEQ)
p.spoelstra@sozawe.groningen.nl

were in great demand, especially courses suited to particular fields of business. Within language culture it is also important to learn how to behave, how to dress, or “how to act” in a certain role. Moreover, the nationally certified courses do not prepare migrants for highly skilled jobs and do not offer the tools to develop themselves (analysis and insight in sentence construction, or how to speak ‘naturally’).

It is important that there are two teachers, who have different tasks. When one teacher explains something about the job content, the other sometimes jumps in to explain new or difficult words. She/he also pays attention to the language students use and their vocabulary.

Ans, Language trainer, Laat Zien, Noorderpoortcollege

This UK-wide development partnership aimed to address the barriers to appropriate employment for refugees and migrant workers. The main issues were underemployment and unemployment of refugees and migrant workers. Other issues included prejudice and racism as well as non-recognition of qualifications and skills and experience. There is a general lack of awareness of skills needed by migrants when it comes to language courses. Inappropriate services also lead to great confusion and lack of confidence.

The main objective was to promote inclusive work practices among employers, by providing support for employees from refugee and migrant communities and promoting lifelong learning opportunities. Another goal was to develop and pilot new approaches to the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), and to pilot the development of networks and partnerships between all organisations concerned with the employment and the employability of refugees and migrants. It was also important to set up a telephone-based advice service for refugees and migrants in languages new to the national learning advice line, learndirect, and to build capacity in mainstream organisations so that they could work with refugees and migrants. Promotional work is crucial in developing and presenting positive images of refugees and migrant workers.

Background There is much discussion in the UK about the political framework. As a result, the framework has changed quite a few times in the last ten years. At the time of writing, UK integration policy encourages people to find employment. Whether this is a low-skilled job or not did not matter greatly. The policy assumed people would look for a more suitable (highly skilled) job while working at the first accepted job. The Progress GB projects, on the other hand, have attempted to deal with the issue in different ways: by seeking to understand what skills their migrants and refugee clients possess and what is needed to find those clients appropriate employment in the UK. So helping people to achieve higher positions presented the biggest challenge for the trainers and advisers, because it conflicted with the national policy.

English for Medical Professionals

Contact: Dave Pickersgill
Organisation: *Skills for Business, the Sheffield College*
dave.pickersgill@sheffcol.ac.uk

was a joint project between Skills for Business (Sheffield College) and the local Strategic Health Authority which aimed to work with local partners to enable overseas medical professionals (refugees and migrants) to reach registration and to develop occupational language courses to address the vocational language needs of such arrivals.

The intensive English language programme was especially designed for health professionals who wanted to work in the National Health Service (NHS). The project developed three integrated occupational language courses, together leading to the IELTS³ qualification (twelve hours of tuition per week, plus about five hours a week of self-study, including tutor-set assignments and revising notes and materials). In addition, a weekly workshop was set up, involving preparation for the PLABS⁴ qualification.

3

IELTS – International English language testing System – <http://www.ielts.org/>

4

PLAB – the Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board (PLAB) Test – <http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/plab/index.asp>

The courses focused on giving participants (i) the language skills to use occupational terminology effectively, and (ii) to communicate successfully within occupational settings. Vocational elements were taught in order to give the participants the opportunity to learn language embedded in appropriate vocational topics.

North East Strategic Partnership Asylum Refugee Support (NESPARS) and North of England Refugee Service (NERS)

Contact: Elaine Dixon
Organisation: *Equal Progress GB, North East of England Partnership*
ed@refugee.org.uk

was a partnership which aimed to address barriers to appropriate employment for refugees and migrants. The lead body for this pilot was NESPARS. The pilot was divided into two areas, one in Newcastle delivered by Your Homes Newcastle, and a project in Middlesbrough delivered by the North of England Refugee Service. This pilot project attempted to test the “Distance to the Labour Market Model”, aimed at providing an effective referral system. The aims were:

1. Piloting the Distance to the Labour Market
 - to provide an effective method of referral and to identify the baseline information a partner will require, thus enabling an effective referral system
 - reporting of identified barriers and looking at ways to overcome them
 - influencing service providers to respond (where appropriate) to identified barriers
 - provide knowledge of other provision/schemes that are relevant to the client group

2. Delivery

- to work with a wide range of partners to provide effective referral systems for clients
- to engage clients onto the individual ‘information, advice and guidance’ (IAG) programme and to monitor their progress
- to complete a skills audit to identify previously acquired skills and qualifications, therefore enabling suitable training and/or employment opportunities and address skills shortages
- where appropriate, refer directly onto the most appropriate pathway or via Jobcentre Plus for specific assistance



Participants of Upskill Projects, Progress GB, UK

Partnership of Plymouth & District Mind, Open Doors, Working Links and START

Contact: Jill Donovan
Organisation: *Plymouth & District Mind Association*
progressgb@plymouthmind.org.uk

A unique partnership approach in the South West of England. The project focused on information and guidance for refugees and migrants, holistic support, ESOL provision and work placements. One hundred beneficiaries were supported in finding training and employment, and with other general issues such as benefits and workers’ rights. Staff, volunteers and students supported through

individual face-to-face appointments and ‘drop-ins’, workshops and utilising the skills of existing beneficiaries through peer support.

Multi-agency working also included successful referral systems and training for businesses and voluntary sector organisations.

Heartland Homes: Programme for Refugee Enterprise Service Specialisation (PRESS)

Contact: David Forbes
Organisation: *Lifeline Options, Waterlinks Enterprise Centre*, 69 Aston Road North, Birmingham B6 4EA.
Tel: 0044.121.359.5435.
Fax: 0044.121.359.2230.
forbesdavidh@yahoo.co.uk

In Birmingham and the West Midlands, Heartland Homes teamed up with Lifeline Options and Birmingham Enterprise in the Programme for Refugee Enterprise Service Specialisation (PRESS). This was a two-way capacity-building (or “regeneration”) programme: doing capacity building for individual refugees going into business or self-employment in trades, professional services, the arts or community enterprise. It linked each refugee to one or more existing providers of business support services and offered expertise to the service providers to build their capacity to help refugees into business and self-employment. The project was managed by David Forbes (Lifeline Options) and involved two full time workers and five volunteers.

learndirect Advice

Contact: Jennie Mirfin
Organisation: *Ufi / learndirect*
jmirfin@ufi.com

is a national service which offers information, advice and guidance on courses and careers in ten languages.

The aim of the learndirect Advice project is to expand the language services offered on the national learndirect Advice Line. Additional information and advice services for refugees and migrant workers are now available in Farsi, French and Polish. These lines will help the target groups to access mainstream services.

The Upskill Project, based at NIACE

Contacts: Ljaja Sterland and Rob Gray
Organisation: *NIACE, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (England and Wales)*
ljaja.sterland@niace.org.uk;
robert.gray@niace.org.uk

provided a range of skills adaptation activities for refugees and migrant workers wishing to start or return to careers in accountancy, administration, construction and health and social care. The project recruited its target number of 100 beneficiaries within six months. Each beneficiary received one-to-one personal advisor support through regular interviews for the duration of the two-year project. All the beneficiaries received a skills audit and careers advice and 48 joined special one-year occupational language courses developed in partnership with local further education colleges. As part of this course beneficiaries received occupationally specific job search training. Beneficiaries were also helped to access 65 vocational courses and 20 beneficiaries undertook work experience. Whilst on

the project 45 people found work of which 70% found work in their preferred occupation. The project published research reports assessing the support available to refugee jobseekers in the East Midlands region of the UK, and estimating the existing and future numbers of refugees. Strong links were established with occupational organisations and with some local employers. NIACE intends to further develop the occupational language courses and publish a manual on skills adaptation methodologies.

Migrants' Integrated Gateway TM – Supporting European Worker Mobility

Contacts: Loretta Hurley, Development Manager,
David Brown, Project Adviser,
Organisation: *Advice for Life*
(formerly Cambridge Independent Advice Centre)
loretta@lorettahurley.com
iag@ciac.org.uk

was a project supporting European worker mobility by promoting the integration, lifelong learning and employability of migrants, through access to information, advice and guidance. It was a two-way Gateway for people from overseas thinking about working in the UK, people newly arrived or settling in the UK, people from overseas wishing to return to their countries of origin, UK citizens wishing to work overseas, and UK citizens wishing to return to the UK.

The Gateway provided face-to-face access to information, advice and guidance, for new arrivals and also an on-line portal is being developed and two action lines will be launched in April 2007.

Beginning in the East of England, and with our international and UK partners, the plan was to achieve, through Equal and other funding, the provision of know-before-you-go information, welcome information, access to IAG face-to-face, on-site and on-line training and support for employers, trade unions and advisers, interactive guides to working in the UK.

In the first ten months of the project 100 contacts for advice were received. The topics of advice covered were employment 57%, benefits 13%, housing 12%, immigration 9%, other 9%. The breakdown of citizens seeking advice was A8 countries 61%, EU 21%, other 18%. The gender balance was women 51%, men 49%.

New arrivals were contacted through advice agencies, local authorities, colleges, employers, trade unions and churches.

I am Portuguese and married to a Brazilian. As far as jobs go, I can only get low paid and irregular employment via a private employment agency. My attempts to get permanent work often fail, as I am not invited to any interviews. I signed up as a beneficiary and the people at Gateway helped me by writing letters of introduction to the employers who had not yet invited me to an interview. Through this process I got an interview and was actually successful in getting a reasonably paid permanent job.

A female participant

Graduation from Upskill Project, Progress GB, UK



A detailed look at the UK project Upskill

This project should serve to illustrate the workings of a programme for innovative vocational skills adaptation. The particular target group had overseas experience in accountancy, business administration, construction and health and social care. The project aimed to secure UK employment corresponding to the skills and experiences of its refugee and migrant participants. Without such support, the only option for most of these people was low-skilled and low-paid work. Appropriate employment is crucial to successful integration. Upskill provided help in the challenges of gaining recognition of qualifications, finding occupational language courses, accessing UK training and work experience, and understanding career pathways and occupational norms.

Every Upskill participant was introduced to a personal advisor who supported him or her throughout the programme. The participant and advisor met regularly, initially to introduce the programme and to undertake assessments of the participant's occupational English and any vocational skills gaps. Then the adviser explained UK career structures and identified the participant's position within them. Activities were then arranged to further develop and re-orientate the participant's skills.

Many participants had occupational language gaps. In collaboration with Derby College and Leicester College, the project developed three unique work-related language courses in four professional fields: accountancy, business administration, health and social care, and construction. These courses concentrated on giving participants the language skills necessary to use occupational terminology and communicate the work-related and relevant ideas that are vital for success at job interviews. Vocational elements were also taught to give participants the opportunity to learn a language embedded in vocational topics that are new to them.

Although often highly skilled and experienced, refugees and migrants may be missing some knowledge about issues relevant in the UK which play no role in their country of origin. The personal advisor could help identify locally available study programmes that could fill any skills gaps. Strong links have been made with the vocational departments of local colleges and universities to facilitate access to courses at all levels in the four professional fields mentioned above.

UK work experience is very helpful in preparing refugees and migrants for paid employment in the UK. Therefore Upskill personal advisors established occupationally relevant placements for participants and liaised with employers to ensure that each placement provided opportunities to address the participant's individual skills and knowledge gaps. The opportunity to become immersed in an occupational setting has proved invaluable for those participants who have undertaken placements.

Providing contact with other people with similar skills, participants are provided opportunities to undertake occupationally related activities such as attending conferences, and also to network.

the working group dynamics

A collective effort demands good cooperation and organisation. The group dynamics in this case, were even more difficult due to the geographical and linguistic barriers. But the participants' enthusiasm and the face-to-face meetings, greatly contributed to the success of this meeting of minds, projects and visions – all with the common goal of how best to develop migrants skills under the given circumstances.

Before the first meeting in Italy, the working group members were handed out questionnaires by the Austrian working group leaders asking them to describe their projects in detail.

At the meeting itself, in Turin in October 2005, the working group members introduced their projects and plans were made for the next meeting and the future activities of the working group. Objectives and experiences were exchanged, including best practice in language teaching, vocational training, advice and guidance tools and in e-learning. The Austrian group presented an overview of all the projects based on the material collected from the questionnaires.

The main issues revolved around the strength and weaknesses of the specific projects, the type of approach and why it was chosen. The challenges of the project were addressed, and geared towards learning and making recommendations for the future. The question was posed if the European Framework was connectable to the qualification schemes of different countries. and how adoptable the qualification systems fit into the larger picture. While some aspects were considered useful, others presented problems (such as the focus on formal qualifications and the negation of informal ones). It was decided that the focus should be on the target group, the migrant themselves, since the national systems were too different to be effectively dealt with.

During the meeting, the working group also developed and discussed terms. Soon it became clear that the English word “skill” stood for many different terms and concepts. The goal was to find terms that could adequately describe this broad concept in each of the four languages.

The working group compared and contrasted these terms leading to a small glossary which gave the participants the impression of having a common language and served as a road map which they could refer to, when they were ‘lost in translation’ (See glossary, center pages of booklet).

A second questionnaire was sent out after the initial meeting, asking all participants for details concerning skills development, target groups, approaches and challenges.

The second meeting in Groningen, in March 2006, presented the overview of skills development in four languages and the results of the questionnaire. The results were discussed, with a focus on skills and approaches. The goals for the final product were debated, and further fields of interest were defined.

After this meeting, the participants received a third questionnaire about the useful skills that migrants and trainers had learned through the different projects.

In the third meeting in Leicester UK, in October 2006, the challenges and solutions were formulated as results and recommendations.

Colleagues working for InterCultureExpress, Austria



The cooperation between the five countries, and more than 20 projects was good and many constructive conclusions were drawn.

The task of this international working group culminated in an interim conference in Vienna, in March 2007. The final conference of the MEET partnership will take place in June 2007, in Brussels.

There the MEET working groups' recommendations will be presented to a wider audience.

