

MIGRANTS' INTEGRATION PROCESSES IN EU – FIRST STEPS IN THEIR NEW HOME COUNTRIES (CASE STUDY: INTEGRA PROJECT)

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Abstract

Integra is a partnership project which aims work together with social partners such as migrant communities and financial institutions from a range of different European countries to create a Europe wide network of relevant institutions in order to reach migrants in partner countries to improve their integration into local society by providing them with opportunities to gain language skills on basic financial matters. The first steps for their language integration into the new society is made through an non formal approach, based on open interaction, simulation scenarios, improvisation and creative use of the learning materials, permanent exchange of questions and answers, reflection time and feedback opportunities.

Key words: migrant communities, integration, financial language, simulation scenarios

Ever heard of financial integration?

If it's important for you (as migrant) to integrate with the local community of your new home country, then the **Migrant Integration Kit** developed during the INTEGRA project contains financial terminology, a financial glossary, and sources of financial information that will assist you by equipping you with the most useful social and financial phrases which can be helpful in unfamiliar situations in a new country.

As the main characteristic, Romania remains an emigration country and becomes not only a transit country, but also a destination country more attractive to immigrants. According to Eurostat forecast, from 2008 - 2060, Romania will have at least a net immigration rate of 18.4 per thousand (1.84%). Unlike the Romanian migration quantified at approximately 10% of Romanian people, migration phenomenon in Romania is relatively modest. Data available at the end of 2010 shows that legal immigration holds 0.3% of the total population (total non-EU immigrants / total population). According to the National Commission for Prognosis, in 2013-2015, the number of immigrants is likely to increase to 200,000 to 300,000 immigrants, which would mean 1% - 1.4% of the population.

The INTEGRA project (<http://integra-project.eu>) brought together partners from 11

countries (LT, GR, DE, ES, TR, IE, NL, RO, GB, PL and BY) with the aim to work together with social partners such as migrant communities and financial institutes to create a Europe wide network of relevant institutes in order to reach migrants in partner countries to improve their integration into local society by providing them with opportunities to gain language skills on basic financial matters.

Within the context, the partnership managed to develop the following activities:

1. Research

- needs analysis in partner countries produced to find out about the problems and experiences that migrants face in a new country because they do not speak the host country language and are not familiar even with the basic norms of everyday life (results are uploaded on the project website under the heading "Summary")
- good practice examples in each partner country collected following the template developed by the coordinating institution on the financial language training and country specific financial and banking operations (results are uploaded on the project website under the heading "Summary")
- comparative analysis produced on the life situation of migrants in the old and new EU

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countries (results are uploaded on the project website under the heading "Summary")

2. Contacts and training programs

- Contacts established and cooperation agreements with migrant communities in partner countries signed
- Contacts established and cooperation agreements with the social partners – financial, non-governmental and state institutions working with migrants, signed
- The training methodologies and programs for training representatives from migrant communities and migrants as final beneficiaries developed
- Collection of the materials and work on the creation of the active in the future portal www.integra-project.eu with the assistance from social partners are underway

3. CD – Migrant Integration KIT

- **Useful phrases:** a list of essential useful words and phrases in English, Lithuanian, German, Dutch, Polish, Greek, Spanish, Romanian, Belorussian and Turkish that could enhance not only your language but also general skills for better adaptation to local society of your new country and labour market.
- **Simulations:** dialogues on different situations dealing with financial and social welfare issues for simulating real life situations and in such a way as to develop your skills and

confidence in managing your personal matters in your new country.

- **Country specific financial tips:** specific information and advise on how to deal with everyday financial needs in partner countries.
- **Useful info**
 - Links to financial institutions or other financial information sources in all partner countries (Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Uk, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Netherlands, Romania, Belaruss Turkey)
 - Links to governmental institutions or other support organizations working with migrants in all partner countries (Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Uk, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Netherlands, Romania, Belaruss Turkey)
 - Links to migrant communities in partner countries
 - Links to other projects or programs working on migrant integration issues
- **Info on representatives from migrant communities.** List of contacts of representatives from migrant communities in partner countries that you are welcome to get in touch with.
- **Good practice examples in partner countries.** Examples of good practices for improving migrants financial integration from various projects, activities or actions being carried out by financial, educational or other kind of institutions in partner countries, could help you understand and deal with unfamiliar situations in your new country

MATERIAL AND METHOD

One of the most important activities of the project was the organisation and implementation of the trainings together with language professionals and financial experts to representatives of migrant communities in order to cascade that training to ultimate beneficiaries-migrants from the partner countries.

Trainings for representatives - instructors from migrant communities organized, who will later cascade the acquired knowledge and gained skills to the final beneficiaries – migrants from partner countries.

Community representatives were selected according to the pre-agreed criteria (one of the most important – good local language skills and good knowledge of national culture). In each partner country 8-10 persons were trained. The most active representatives (3-5 per country) were included into the European network of trainers

The trainings (training time-10 hours) were meant for training the instructors on how to use the developed by the project financial language

teaching program and methodology, based on elements of drama and introduce the project website containing the collected teaching/learning materials and useful info. Every potential instructor was equipped with a CD containing materials and methodology guidelines to be used for teaching final beneficiaries.

Trainings for final beneficiaries – migrants from partner countries organized with migrant community representatives acting as „teachers – instructors“.

Each partner country-10 migrants (average 3 migrants per community), 16 hours training program (2 hours for project presentation, introduction into the project website, 12 hours for trainings following the program , 2 hours for reflections and summing up).

Trainings were run by the migrant community representatives - instructors, who have already integrated in the new environment.

The trainings were developed after the following **Methodology and Guidelines**, which has been elaborated to support the migrant representatives on how to conduct six (language skills) workshops' with migrant communities:

Training session one

1. Carry out an induction in relation to the overall project.
2. Introduce 'Representative' aims – what the representatives are aiming to accomplish by conducting the 'Six Language Skills Workshops' with migrant communities. These aims are:
 - To train members of migrant communities to develop better skills and confidence in managing personal financial matters;
 - To develop migrant communities' basic language skills for dealing with financial matters.
 The financial areas are:
 Claiming Social Benefit;
 How to use the Website;
 Opening a Bank Account;
 Exchange and Transfer of Money;
 Paying for Services or Products;
 Job Related Information;
 Negotiating Payments for Accommodation;
 Reporting a Stolen Bank Card by Telephone;
 Borrowing Money and Getting Credit.
3. Ethos of a Trainer Facilitator.
4. Training in how to conduct Drama Games and Exercises.
5. Functions of Drama Games and Exercises.

Training session two

1. Website Training for the Representatives.
2. Discussion of content for the first two Language Skills Workshops i.e. Claiming Social Benefit and Opening a Bank Account.
3. Representatives themselves practice running / facilitating under supervision the following drama games and exercises from workshops one and two of the Language Skills Workshops. The games are: Name Game, Culture Shock and Energy Circle. Also do work on functions of the exercises.
4. Representatives are provided with feedback from the trainer in relation to the above.
5. Introductory training in Image Work and Improvisation for the representatives. Look at Complete the Image and Image of the Word. Work on functions.

Training session three

1. Representatives themselves again practice running or facilitating under supervision the following drama games and exercises from workshops one and two of the Language Skills Workshops. The games are: Name Game, Culture Shock, Energy Circle and Getting to Know You.
2. Representatives are provided with feedback from the trainer in relation to the above.
3. Representatives themselves practice running or facilitating under supervision the following drama games and exercises from workshops two, three, four and five. The games are: Walk Clap, Bomb and Shield, Falling and Columbian Hand Hypnosis.
4. Representatives are provided with feedback from the trainer in relation to the above.

5. Training in Image Work and Improvisation for the representatives. Look at Complete the Image, Image of the Word, and Image of the Hour.
6. Training in 'How to Read a Script'.
7. Discussion of content for numbers three, four, five and six from the Language Skills Workshops.

Training session four

1. Representatives themselves practice running or facilitating under supervision a short version of workshops Two and Three from the Language Skills workshops.
2. Representatives are provided with feedback from the trainer in relation to the above..
3. Training in Image Work and Improvisation for the representatives.
4. Training in 'How to Read a Script'.

After TRAINING SESSION FOUR the two representatives should ideally go into the community and conduct (pilot) Workshops One and Two from the Language Skills workshops with their migrant communities.

Training session five

1. Discussion and feedback for the representative's workshops one and two conducted with the migrant community. Representatives discuss with the trainer how the workshops went.
2. Representatives themselves practice running or facilitating under supervision a short version of 'Workshops Four, Five and Six re the Six Language Skills Workshop Series.
3. Representatives are provided with feedback from the trainer in relation to the above.
4. Training in Image Work and Improvisation for the representatives.
5. Training in 'How to Read a Script'.

Training session six:

1. Reflection on overall training activity.
2. Provide final pointers and support.
3. Opportunity to practice runs a guided workshop – to be chosen by the representatives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In figures the results of the training process were:

- 28 training sessions with 104 hours of training for migrant communities' representatives
- 58 sessions with 195 hours of trainings with final beneficiaries.
- Number of trainers, who trained representatives: 15
- Number of trained representatives:

60

- Number of trained final beneficiaries: 275

- Migrant communities involved: from Afghanistan, Somalia, Russia, Bulgaria, Belarus, Romania, Lithuania, Palestina, Poland, Iraq, Syria, Israel, Tunisia, Portugal, South Africa, Germany, Sweden, Ireland, Norway, UK, Denmark, Morocco, Algeria, Jordan, Taiwan, France, Greece, Moldova, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, Cameroon, Pakistan, Philippines, Ethiopia, Ukraine, India, Eritrea, Turkey, Armenia, and from Spanish/Latin American community

Taking into consideration the reflections of the participants on the trainings, the results were:

What was innovative about the trainings?

- **The use of drama techniques**
- The challenge of **working with adults representing communities of foreigners in Romania** was new and exciting
- **The non-formal approach** which is much more encouraging and effective; it helps people get rid of inhibitions and it connects them directly to real life situations, which is actually what is relevant to them.

How much did trainees benefit from the trainings?

- The practical side of the activities suggested for the training are the real benefit for people who struggle with a new language in various cultural, economic and social contexts. The spot-on activities organized during the training were a frame for future **practice based on the materials offered in the Glossary and set of Usual Phrases.**

- They improved and even developed **teaching techniques**, especially by using drama and role play activities

What new skills and competences were gained?

- The most gained competences were the **interactive techniques** for working with participants, the use of **drama and simulation techniques, role play.**

- Also the trainees improved their **communication and cultural mediation** skills and their **specific financial and banking language.**

other competences mentioned were:

- Development of **teaching technics**
- Techniques for **working with groups**
- **Working and developing specific forms / materials**
- **IT Competences**

- **Negotiation technics**

- **Argumentation**

- The members of the migrant communities will get to know each other more quickly and will interact easier; a feeling of **group belonging** was stimulated

Do they feel more confident now in dealing with financial matters?

- “I enjoyed all the activities and the fact that after the training I was able to go to the bank and speak in Romanian”

- “I learned very quick to speak in Romanian”

- “We learned financial services, numbers, dates used in dialogs”

CONCLUSIONS

All the partners proofed the fact that both trainings were very successful and useful for the participants. They were of the opinion that trainings have shown migrants the way how to start dealing with financial matters by speaking the language of the host country. The activities suggested for the training were the real benefit for people who struggle with a new language in various cultural, economic and social contexts. Combining drama methods with concrete information on financial matters allowed migrants to feel more relaxed and be open to the learning process.

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