



Newsletter 2 – March 2012

Allowing migrants to use a tool and method to value their competences and enhance their social and professional integration within national labour markets

Leonardo da Vinci pilot project – Transfer of Innovation

Initiated by Autremonde (leader) and iriv (coordinator) in France, Austria, Great Britain, Bulgaria and Spain



Leadership : Autremonde (France) – Anne-Laure Joly

Coordination : iriv conseil (France) – Bénédicte Halba

Partners organisations :

Oikodrom (Austria) – Heidi Dumreicher

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CERMES - New Bulgarian University (Bulgaria) – Anna Krasteva

Ciumedra - University of Burgos (Spain) – Monica Ibanez



I. Presentation of the Migrapass project- A portfolio and a companion for migrants

Goal

A European team is currently working on improving the recognition of migrant workers' skills and competences, which will run between October 2010 and September 2012 and involves five European countries: Austria, Bulgaria, France, Great Britain and Spain.

Objectives

The main goal of the Migrapass is to propose a portfolio together with mentoring. The project adopts a collaborative approach in order to value the unique experience of migrants and to enhance their position within the labour market.

The portfolio should allow them to identify and value the professional experience acquired in their native country (often ignored in host countries), together with the non-formal and formal learning gained through different experiences. This can include such activities as voluntary involvement in migrants' shelters but also the valuing of their unique competence linked to their expatriation past, e.g. leaving their native country, living and working in a foreign country.

The professional profile of migrants will be enriched by these unique competences which are required in a changing labour market where the ability to adapt and to be mobile are key assets in a professional career.

Steps

2010-2011 – Designing a portfolio for migrants to facilitate a professional integration

2011 – Proposing a mentoring to use the portfolio

2011-2012 – Experimenting the portfolio among mentors and migrants

2012 – Synthesising the main results through a publication

Useful information

For further information please go to the web site: www.migrapass.net

For further information about the experimentation and other questions please go to the web blog <http://migrapass.blogspot.com/>

Duration: 1st of October 2010–30th of September 2012

Project Number: 2010-1-FR1-LEO05-14483

Title: Migrapass – a portfolio and a companion for migrants

Commissioned by : EC Programme Leonardo da Vinci

Second European meeting - London - July 2011 - held by the Roehampton University – highlights

Dr Stephen Driver, Director of the Social Sciences Department and Prof Jane Broadbent, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the Roehampton University kindly came and wished the Migrapass team good luck for the meeting and project.

The main discussion was focused on the portfolio and its use. The different parts of the portfolio were discussed and validated.

The main target groups were reminded:

1. low skilled migrants without any qualification,
2. migrants without any professional experience such as youngsters and women
3. skilled migrants but with their qualifications unrecognized on the national labour markets

The mentoring is meant to help professionals working with migrants make a fruitful use of the portfolio. Mentoring is not the same as training - it is more an informal and collaborative exercise.

Mentors may have a flexible role which was demonstrated in numerous terms they were referred to: facilitators, mediums, intercultural mediators... Migrants themselves may become mentors. It is one of the objectives to be achieved by the Migrapass project.

Members of the team gathered by the Migrapass may become in the first place mentors especially for the experimentation phasis.

The guide for mentors to be designed to define who are the metnors, how they should be prepared and how they should be selected will be useful.

Source : Michal Garapich, Roehampton University, London, July 2011.

Third European meeting - Vienna - October 2011- held by Oikodrom - highlights

A plenary session about the terminology used was proposed by Heidi as wording has highly specific connotations and so we need to be extremely careful when using words such as migrant, host country, refugee...

Our British Bangladeshi colleague, Jamil told us that in his native country, migrants or foreigners are described as “non- residential Bangladeshi - NRB”. Bangla has just one word - “Bideshi” - to describe a foreigner even if she/he comes from inside the country and has just a little difference in dialect. The Oikodrom team proposed to collect in a glossary the different terms used in the different countries to describe the “migrant population”.

A vivid discussion about the language used by the portfolio allowed the group to share thoughts and ideas. The tool should be used in national labour markets and so must also be used as a linguistic tool not only to improve the national language but also to speak the specific language of the labour market (experience, skills, competences...).

Nevertheless, in the first place it is possible to better understand the process of the portfolio and to facilitate the support provided by mentors by translating the portfolio in the native language of the migrants. This has already been done in Britain where Michal translated the portfolio into Polish in order to experiment the tool among this community where he has been working for the past years.

The portfolio process and mentoring are also seen as a psychological process of gaining self-esteem. Moreover, they enhance the empowerment of migrants in the labour market. The collaborative approach and collective use of the portfolio are also highly enhanced through this process.

Source : Heidi Dumreicher and Ruth Eiselsberg, Oikodrom, Vienna, October 2011

France

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News of the Migrapass in France

The national advisory group was held in September in France. It gathered many key actors of migration in France on national and local levels.

The Direction for Welcome, Integration and Citizenship at the Ministry for Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Sustainable Development (DAIC) is very interested in Migrapass's achievements and would like to enhance the competence approach. The portfolio and mentoring proposed by our project should be used in this perspective. The DAIC proposed that the portfolio and mentoring could be used by the national employment agency (Pôle Emploi) and by the national public body responsible for supporting migrants when they have just arrived in France (Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration-OFII). They could provide financial support to the Migrapass project (as far as the subsidiary part of the financing for France is concerned).

At the national level several other associations are also interested in the Migrapass:

1. Assfam, (www.assfam.org), an association created in 1951 in order to provide migrants family with both a social and professional support; their main target groups are youngsters and female migrants, low skilled and unqualified workers.
2. France Terre d'Asile (<http://www.france-terre-asile.org/>), a French association created in 1971 with the aim of supporting asylum seekers and migrants in their social & professional integration.
3. Cité des Métiers – a platform for migrant associations especially towards African migrants (Dynamiques africaines) and Latin American migrants (la Tribu).

At the local level, associations working with migrants in Paris and Seine et Marne are also willing to experiment the portfolio:

1. In Seine et Marne: Centre social Françoise Dolto ;
2. In Paris : Autremonde will experiment the portfolio among the public of migrants and will train its team of volunteers on the way to use the portfolio. They will be the mentors.

Bénédicte Halba from iriv presented the Migrapass project to IMISCOE, a European network which focusses on migration. Managed by the University of Amsterdam (Netherlands), the network held an International Conference on *Dynamics of European Migration Space: Economy, Politics and Development* in Warsaw during September 2011 under the aegis of the Polish European Presidency of the European Union. On this occasion she wrote an article entitled *Intercultural mediation, a "New Deal" for local policymaking of Interculture, bridging local, national and European levels at the workshop – The local policymaking of Interculture between national integration policy, diversity, cohesion and development*

Source : Bénédicte Halba, Paris, December 2011.

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News of the Migrapass in Austria

- Oikodrom's graphic designer Stephan Pfeffer, who had already designed the much appreciated Migrapass logo, created also a trilingual leaflet (German, Turkish, Serbo-Croatian) about the Migrapass Workshop Series in Austria – in order to gain publicity, interest and members for the pilot group as well as function as an attractive advertising and give away.
- Oikodrom had started preparing its experimentation of the Migrapass portfolio with the Austrian pilot group of Migrants, a group of women with Turkish backgrounds, already before summer and this was followed by the first real experimentation session in September.

Several important lessons were learned and feedback could be given to the project and the partners:

The less educated trainees there are, the weaker their language skills are or the less their experiences in self-reflecting methods, the more time is needed to prepare the portfolio work and to hold trust-building sessions beforehand. Also more time is needed for the portfolio work itself and more mentoring is needed.

The more trainees are already acting on the labour market the more labour

market oriented the output of the portfolio will be.

It might be meaningful with some audiences, as it was with the pilot group in Austria, to choose some of the competences to work with intensely, rather than to have to rush through them all.

- The 3rd Migrapass project meeting was successfully held in Vienna October 6 and 7, 2011. A very good and efficient atmosphere led to intense exchange amongst the partners and fruitful feedback. One of many results was the perception that while keeping the Migrapass portfolio as a European tool and method we need to incorporate the huge differences in the potential audience of the Migrapass, i.e. regional and national differences but also the differences between different user groups.
- The national Advisory Board Austria met again in November and new attendants from the Cultural and Political sector participated. Some new ideas and project of using the Migrapass portfolio were developed and will be concretized in upcoming bilateral meetings and discussions.

Source : Ruth Eiselsberg, Oikodrom, Vienna, November 2011

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News of the Migrapass in Bulgaria

*Source: Anna Krasteva, Evelina Staikova,
Cermes, November 2011*

Anna Krasteva
Evelina Staikova
Vanya Ivanova
Ildiko Otova

An innovative and pioneering project in Bulgaria which bridges volunteering and migration.

Intensive and fruitful work:

- Contacting stakeholders: representatives of migrant organisations, institutions and organisations with responsibilities for immigration policy;
- Forming a volunteer team
- 29 May, 2011 – First advisory board, information for the project and first feedback from the stakeholders
- 26 July, 2011 – Second advisory board, in-depth discussion on the portfolio with the key organizations working with migrants and representatives of migrant communities
- Promoting the project at the CERMES website and events



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News on the Migrapass in Spain

The **first mentoring process** for the Migrapass in Spain begun in November 2011 and dealt mainly with the training of a group of mentors who were themselves transnational migrants.

The Spanish team had five meetings and the number of mentors attending these meetings was descending progressively and out of the eleven participants in the first meeting, only two of them came to our last meeting in December 2011. Contacts with these immigrants were made through the stakeholders who participate in the project.

Among the reasons for the difficulties faced are the following:

- (i) in one case the mentor left the city of Burgos and moved to Madrid for a job offered there;
- (ii) in another case the person was living in a town nearby Burgos and could not find anyone to drive him to the meetings;
- (iii) in another case, one woman found a job in a shoe business and could not come because of the timing

- (iv) the others either mentioned that they had some unexpected compromise at the last minute and could not come.

Despite the barriers to overcome, the Spanish team is to have a series of individual meetings with these migrants in March in order to assess their willingness to carry out the portfolio.

A **second mentoring process** begun in February with students of Social Education in their last year at the University. This is a group of four students mentored by Monica Ibanez Angulo on the portfolio process and who have been experimenting Migrapass since February to March at two foundations, Accem and Burgos Acoge, stakeholders of Migrapass in Burgos.

In Accem, the Migrapass is being carried out within the context of the 'Formation' program. Two male students are the mentors of a variable group between four and eleven African men. They meet at the space provided by Accem downtown Burgos and at the space provided by the 'Foro Solidario' everyday two hours in the morning plus another two hours in Tuesdays and Thursdays evenings.

In Burgos Acoge, Migrapass is also carried out within the Formation program framework. They meet everyday in the morning at one of the organization's headquarters where they have the Spanish class and they also meet at the temporal lodging provided by the organization. In this case, participants do not use computers and the portfolio is being developed in writing and later transcribed to electronic means by the tutors.

Source : Mónica Ibáñez Angulo, Burgos, March 2012

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News of the Migrapass in UK

An Advisory Board meeting was held in London during March 2011 with various national and local stakeholders to give an overview of the Migrapass aims and objectives. The next Advisory Board will be held in April 2012 after most of the experimentation workshops have been held so that we can report on the effectiveness of the Portfolio.

At the University of Roehampton we have been busy organising training sessions with mentors and numerous workshops with migrants from two designated groups – Polish and Bangladeshis. So far three workshops have been held with Polish nationals. These involved 24 migrants from various social backgrounds who filled out and used the Portfolio. One workshop has also been organised for Bangladeshi women with 12 of them using the Portfolio. There are additional two workshops planned for late April with Bangladeshi migrants. All the migrants are using the Portfolio and they fill in a feedback form in order to assess the usefulness of the process. Furthermore, the mentors are also debriefing the project coordinators on each individual case.

These workshops would not have happened without a fruitful and productive working relationship with various ethnic/migrants associations. Mentors from the Polish Psychologists Association, The Upper Room, Jagonari - Women's Education Resource Centre and the Bangladeshi Workers Association are very enthusiastic about the project and have begun to use the Portfolio in their own work with vulnerable migrants.

Prof. John Eade and Dr. Michal P. Garapich chaired a panel introducing the project during the CRONEM international conference at Surrey University in June 2011, which involved other members of the Migrapass project. The presentations gave an overview of the project and received good feedback from the audience. Another panel is planned for the CRONEM 2012 conference.

Source : John Eade and Michal Garapich, Cronem, London, March 2012