

***SOCIAL INCLUSION, MOTIVATION AND SUPPORT FOR LIFE  
LONG LEARNING – CASE STUDY INTEGRA PROJECT***

---

**Andreea Corina CLEMINTE  
Claudia Elena DINU  
Cristina Anca COLIBABA**

**Abstract**

*In today's global knowledge society and with ever increasing mobility, migrants face many challenges before they can settle and feel part of a new community. Two major challenges, which affect many new arrivals, are lack of language skills and lack of basic knowledge on financial matters. Taking these variations into account, the INTEGRA<sup>1</sup> project will address specific groups of migrants in partner countries analysing their needs in terms of basic local language knowledge in relation to financial matters, financial terminology, basic financial documentation as well as specifics of financial systems in partner countries in order to fulfil everyday needs.*

**Key-words:** immigration, financial matters, language skills, communities, integration, trainings.

Legal immigration and immigrant integration issues are discussed extensively in the European Union. Social integration of foreigners in the host societies representing the core of public immigration policy. The knowledge, the actual promotion of fundamental rights, the non-discrimination and equal opportunities for all elements are extremely important to ensure a smooth integration of third country nationals and for joint efforts from both the immigrants and the native population for the construction of open responsible and diverse society. Developments can easily illustrate how the liberal democracy and the European integration

---

<sup>1</sup> INTEGRA - Migrants' Integrating Kit Basic Language for Dealing with Financial Matters is a Lifelong Learning Programme, Grundtvig Multilateral project (ref. no. 510258-LLP-1-2010-1-LTGRUNDTVIG-GMP ) funded by the European Commission.

process function, the default transformation of immigration policy, the degree of adaptability and openness to change, controversial character and difficulties along the way.

Unlike Romanian migration quantified at approximately 10% of Romania population, the phenomenon of immigration in Romania is relatively modest. Data available in late 2010 shows that legal immigration holds 0.3% of total population (total non-EU immigrants / total population). According to the National Commission Prognosis, in 2013-2015, the number of immigrants is likely to increase to 200,000 - 300,000 immigrants, meaning 1% - 1.4% of the population.

The influx of foreigners to Romania throughout the last decade came in an upward trend, diversifying the composition of migration flows. Also, consider that the status Romania's EU membership, economic and social development potential with future entry into the Schengen area will make Romania a destination increasingly attractive to immigrants.

European immigration policies and thus to integrate foreigners in the Member States societies are directly connected with the idea of security, control of legal migration and prevent and combat illegal immigration. In this context, internally, each country has to find their own balance and specific response to issues of immigration and integration of foreigners, between security and human rights and the interests of economic and demographic respect for human dignity.

European policies on immigration are still ambivalent and have an ambiguous character going through a continuous process of transformation and adaptation. The local and national legislation constitutes on one hand as agents of change and on the other hand as the source/cause of controversies and misunderstandings. Experience has shown that legal and economic mechanisms do not automatically produce social and political progress and does not provide implicit integration of migrants, access to employment, education, social security and fair distribution of benefits determined by the competitiveness and growth.

So, what are we going to do if these policies are not enough? Concrete measures managing immigration and risks are needed. We tried to identify the most important needs of the immigrants after the legal process of integration have been done. In today's global knowledge society and with ever increasing mobility, migrants face many challenges before they can settle and feel part of a new community. Two major challenges, which affect many new arrivals, are lack of language skills and lack of basic knowledge on financial matters.

## **About the project**

Analysis of recent arrivals within the partner countries indicates that a great variety of needs exists from different groups of migrants originating from within and from outside of the EU. Taking these variations into account, this project will address specific groups of migrants in partner countries analysing their needs in terms of basic local language knowledge in relation to financial matters, financial terminology, basic financial documentation as well as specifics of financial systems in partner countries in order to fulfill everyday needs.

The 2010 strategic priorities addressed by the project include:

- partnership addressing the issue of adult education/learning and improving the flexibility of education/learning provision, particularly in relation to disadvantaged groups;
- partnerships addressing the issue of adult training methodology through introducing "good practices" in the field of adult training.

The priorities for Multilateral projects addressed include:

- 4.2.1 Key competences (helping learners to develop transversal competences such as social, civic, cultural and intercultural competences and entrepreneurship in order to adapt to changing society and requirements of the labour market);
- 4.2.3. Promoting adult learning for marginalized and disadvantaged citizens and migrants (developing learning approaches to integrate or reintegrate marginalized citizens into society and the labour market; as well as sharing good practice on intercultural education, learning by marginalized citizens, and their linguistic, social and cultural integration).

**The aim of the project** is 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.

**The specific objectives** are to:

- analyses of the immigrants needs in terms of basic local language knowledge in relation to financial matters, financial terminology, basic financial documentation as well as specifics of financial systems in partner countries in order to fulfill everyday needs;
- compare good practice used for introducing basic local language on financial matters and basic country specific financial operations in old EU member states (members before 2004) as well as in new EU member states (joined EU in 2004 and later);
- collect materials for the development of an essential Kit for migrants, which will consist of financial terminology, financial glossary and guide with main information on financial

institutes or information sources in partner countries' and migrants' languages corresponding to migrant needs;

- organize and implement trainings together with language professionals and financial experts to representatives of migrant communities in order to cascade that training to ultimate beneficiaries-migrants of the partner countries;
- collect materials to create and develop an active web portal with the support and direct involvement of social partners

**The general objectives** are to enhance:

- the basic language skills of migrants living in partner countries, specifically relating to financial matters;
- migrants' potential for mobility within the EU labour market;
- intercultural learning and empathy in migrant communities for international communication in different countries;
- self-confidence among migrants;
- ability to break personal and cultural frontiers

**Main outputs:**

- created European network of fitted trainers from migrant communities able to continue delivering the skills to final beneficiaries;
- developed Useful Kit of financial terminology, financial glossary and a guide with main information on financial institutes or financial information sources;
- created constantly updated long-time after project is over active web portal integrating all the useful financial information, on-line trainings, contact information and networks data

**Target groups:**

- migrants originating from within and from outside of the EU;
- social partners, education institutes and other support organizations to migrant communities.

**Activities developed until now in the project:**

During last year, EuroEd (as Romanian partner) has worked together with 10 partners (from Lithuania, Greece, Germany, Spain, Turkey, Ireland, Netherlands, UK, Poland and Belarus) on developing learning materials and unique methodologies using theatre games and exercises for training representatives of migrant communities who will pass their knowledge to final beneficiaries: migrants.

The 1<sup>st</sup> step we took was the implementation of the need analysis. The objectives were to determine: Migrants' language level (partner countries languages); Migrants understanding

of the basic financial information and of the financial system (within the partner countries); To identify means of supporting further development of the above and improve migrants' daily life in the partner countries. Also within this step we managed to gather information on the exact number and origin of the migrant groups in Romania and especially those in the region of Iasi, as Iasi is from many aspects a region preferred by this population (close to border, university city, foreign financial investment etc.). We have tried to contextualize the needs analysis by contacting relevant and reliable information sources so that we have realistic results. We contacted the Romanian Immigration Office and we carried discussions on the number of immigrants legally registered, residing in the county of Iasi. According to the Romanian Immigration Office, Iasi Immigration Service, in Romania there are 3889 immigrants: 17 migrants from EU member states, 3872 migrants from outside the EU. However this list does not include all current foreign students studying in Iasi universities because its updating happens only once a year.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> step was to contact those groups identified in the first step and deliver presentations on project and focus the participants' benefit from participating in this project. We consider that attracting social partners in this early stage of the project will benefit both the partnership and the end beneficiaries in a number of ways:

1. The partnership has the opportunity to present the objectives of the project from the very beginning and thus select those participants interested in the activities planned for the project
2. Offer the migrant population more time to internalize the new information on the project and thus better understand what their personal gain can be within this project
3. Allow (migrant) associations the time to plan ahead and possibly come up with new approaches which would benefit the migrant population they represent

We have therefore contacted a number of associations which then lead us directly to individuals. In the process, there were identified both older communities and new ones. The older communities, the Russian - Lipovans Community and the Chinese community, continue to get new members who need help in order to become fully integrated, while the new communities, the Medical Students' Society Iasi and the Tunisian Association Iasi are formed especially of young people who come to study in Romania and who, in some cases, continue to live and work here. We thus identified our social partners in the project, who are the Russian - Lipovans Community and the University for Medical Studies in Iasi, which is the institution where most of the students from abroad attend courses, especially as they take Romanian classes too for better integration. The contacts with migrant associations and the

University were also meant to identify representatives of migrant associations who already have an experience in Romania and who could take part in the training activities.

Before handing out questionnaires we considered it would be best to inform the target group on the focus of the project and on the aims the international partnership has for the funded life of the project and also for the time after. We think it is important the beneficiaries view this project and the activities within it as a continuous process which can be undertaken by their associations, customized and continued in directions depending of the real needs of their groups. However we did underline the specificity and main activities planned for the funded life of the project. We tried to help them envisage their role within the project and the intake they will gain from participating in the project activities.

As the main focus of the present project is on terminology in the financial field, EuroEd contacted banks (we signed the agreement contract with the Transilvania Bank to get involved in the project as social partner) and other financial institutions to find out if there are any good practice examples already applicable and which areas are mostly in demand for foreigners living and studying / working in Romania. As the common practice for the banks is to use English as the lingua franca when dealing with foreigners, it became even more evident that the project is needed and that the materials to be developed will be a great help both for new residents in Romania and for financial institutions.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> step was to distribute questionnaires and collect data from the members of these migrant groups. We were able to deliver a large number of questionnaires (100) to people from the following countries: Israel, Tunis, France, Nigeria, China, Morocco, Portugal, Norway, Greece, South Africa, India, Palestine, Ireland, Somalia, Sweden, UK, Kenya, Pakistan, Mauritius, Albania, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, Canada, and Lebanon. Who are: employed, self- employed, students and retired people. The statistics are:

1. The Medical Students' Society Iasi – We have had 56 respondents (students) out of which 20 are migrants from old EU member states joining EU before 2004. The rest 36 migrants are from countries outside the EU.
2. The Tunisian Association Iasi - We have had 15 respondents (students) out of which 15 are migrants from countries outside the EU.
3. The Russian - Lipovans Community - We have had 10 respondents (employed). All ten respondents are migrants from countries outside EU.
4. Chinese – We have had 5 respondents (employed) all of them migrants from outside EU. This ethnic group does not yet have the legal status of an Association and therefore we decided it would be better to continue collaboration with them per individual although they

are informally structured in various communities depending on their field of activity and they are also quite numerous.

The 4<sup>th</sup> step was on the interpretation and development of the national survey based on the questionnaires collected. Implementing the needs analysis in Romania, especially in the region of Iasi has provided us with the following conclusions:

1. Providing information on Romania (language and culture) prior migration – this allows migrants to plan ahead, get an accurate picture of the new country and tune their level of expectations. At this level we can very easily and successfully collaborate with the social partners who can support the international partnership by providing the necessary data on migrants and also by providing migrants with the necessary information on the country they intend to move or have already moved to.
2. Offer general linguistic and cultural support – basic knowledge of language and culture should be the starting point to help new comers better integrate themselves and then plan their future development in this direction.
3. Offer support for specialized contexts – The results of the analysis show that beyond the need of basic cultural info and linguistic abilities, migrants need to be able to deal with daily financial matters and they need to be trained in this direction as well.
4. Relevance - all the information and training need to be contextualize so as to bridge the gap between theory and practice and equip beneficiaries directly with the skills and information they need in daily life.
5. Appropriateness is another key factor referring both to language level/ cultural information and personal learning needs of the beneficiaries.
6. As communication in any language is an extremely complex process, all 4 skills need to be addressed and developed on to equip beneficiaries with a holistic experience which would later on ensure their successful performance in different linguistic circumstances.

The 5<sup>th</sup> step was on working together with the social partners on providing good practice examples. The social partners filled in the template developed within the project with examples of activities addressed to the final project beneficiaries. The good practice examples presented were: from the Medical Students' Society Iasi: foreign language departments of SSMI students' Union, partnership with the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations and staff responsible with the activities of the foreign students; from the Russian – Lipovans in Romania Community (C.R.L.): educational, cultural and spiritual activities; and from Transilvania Bank (BT): Language support. Receiving from the social partners the

templates with the good practices examples, each partners developed a ppt. presentation summarizing the activities/aspects presented.

The need analysis questionnaire and the national survey have been translated into Romanian, French, Russian, Greek and Arabic.

As a 6<sup>th</sup> step, during the contacts with financial institutions and while interpreting the results of the questionnaires, the partnership started to compile a set of phrases, scenarios and financial terms to contribute to the set of materials in the financial field intended for the project target audience.

### **In progress:**

The partnership is involved in development of:

- Materials for the Kit ( in all partner languages): financial terminology, financial glossary and guide with main information on financial institutes or financial information sources in partner countries' and migrants' languages corresponding to migrant needs.
- Materials for web portal: useful phrases, downloadable learning materials etc.
- Methodology for training trainers - methodology for training the representatives of migrant communities members to become fitted trainers and be capable to continue educational activities reaching final beneficiaries.
- Methodology to train final beneficiaries- representatives from migrant communities in each partner country during trainings will acquire basic knowledge of local language on financial matters. To be able to deliver these knowledge and skills to final beneficiaries during the project and long after the lifetime of project is over these fitted trainers will need special methodology for effective education.

### **Future plans:**

The partnership is now ready to take next steps: presentation of the program to social partners and training representatives of migrant communities who will later transfer the knowledge to their migrant community members using the developed project materials and scenarios. The implementation of the trainings for selected representatives are about to be planned. Also during the project life will be organized interactive international virtual forum with active participation of the trainees and partner representatives following the trainings. In this way the trainees, who will become trainers for final beneficiaries will have a chance to get in touch with each other and will have an opportunity to share and practice their newly acquired skills with others, who took part in the trainings.



## **Conclusion:**

The project will have a great impact on:

- migrant communities members, which will be using the Kit developed during the project and the web portal for their everyday needs and will be trained by the trainers-representatives from migrant communities, equipped with the methodology to educate wider range of migrants;

- migrants, who do not belong to migrant communities involved in the project, will be able to use the web portal and Kit for their self-learning of basic language on financial matters;

- general public, who will use the Kit and web portal materials as an in-formal way of learning;

- educational institutes, would use project materials as a non-formal way of teaching.

Based on the experience of other European countries, we can assume that Romania will go through a period of growing immigration, followed perhaps by a relative balance between inflow and influx of migrants mainly to get a country of immigration. The same approach allows us to conceive of evolution versus Romania in the field of immigrant integration policies in relation to countries with similar developments. And to take as models different parts that they propose to build and implement positive national integration policies avoiding any negative consequences.

The project will develop and implement activities with direct involvement and cooperation of migrant communities and financial institutes, involving the general public of local communities, will provide possibilities to understand and learn certain languages, basic financial terms, to develop multicultural and multilingual experiences, which will allow to develop self-confidence and as a result will contribute enhancing cohesion, active citizenship and intercultural communication.

## **Bibliography**

1. Studiu asupra fenomenului imigratiei in romania. Integrarea strainilor in societatea Romaneasca (ediție electronica, 2011), Iris Alexe, Bogdan Paunescu, ISBN 978-973-0-10715-9
2. România - Raport de țară în Migrația, ocuparea forței de muncă și politicile de integrare pe piața muncii în Uniunea Europeană 2000-2009, Alexe, I., Independent

Network of Labour Migration and Integration Experts

<http://www.labourmigration.eu/research>

3. Guga, S.; Toth, G.; Voicu, O., **Imigrant în România: Perspective și riscuri**, (octombrie 2008), București, Fundația Soros România, [http://www.osf.ro/en/fisier\\_acord\\_comunicate.php?document=143](http://www.osf.ro/en/fisier_acord_comunicate.php?document=143)
4. [www.integra-project.eu](http://www.integra-project.eu)

**Andreea Corina Cleminte** is project coordinator at Fundatia EuroEd. She holds a Master's degree in the field of social work, with extensive experience in developing projects in non-governmental institutions. Skills and experience in project management of EU projects and project team member in all the national and transnational projects.

**Claudia Elena Dinu** is a teacher at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Medicine and Pharmacy T. Popa Iasi. Teaching French and Romanian as a foreign language. On the research field she deals with elements of discourse and medical communication analysis and the sociological study of vocation. Also due to her expertise she is involved in different activities of transnational projects in the field of linguistic education and training.

**Cristina Anca Colibaba** is PhD at University of Medicine and Pharmacy Grigore T. Popa and executive president at Fundatia EuroEd. She has over 30 years of experience in language education, especially English and also have a wide experience in managing and coordinating transnational projects in the field of linguistic education and training, adult education and LLL. She was / is project coordinator of over 30 (EU) projects implemented locally, nationally or trans-nationally.